



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

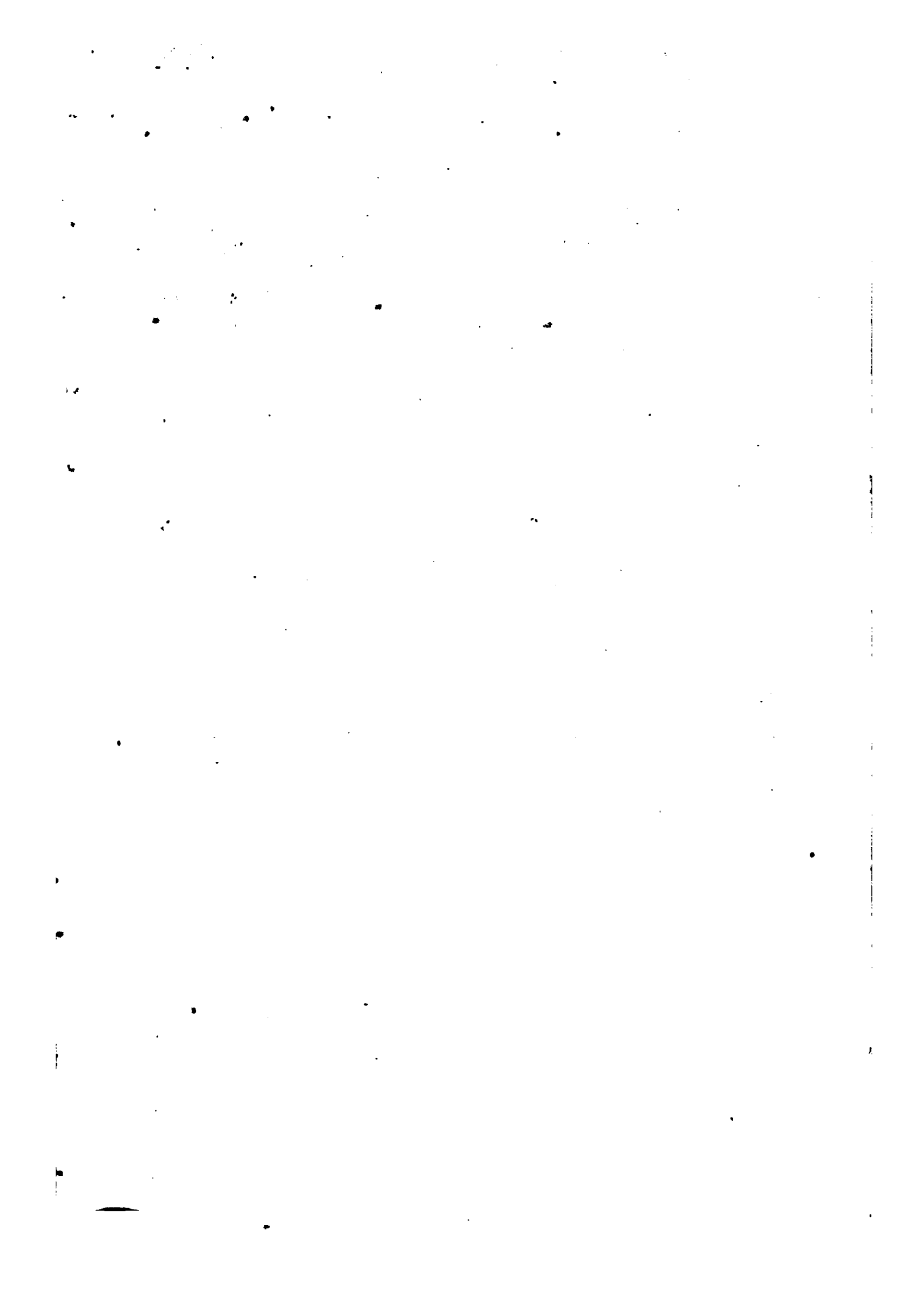
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

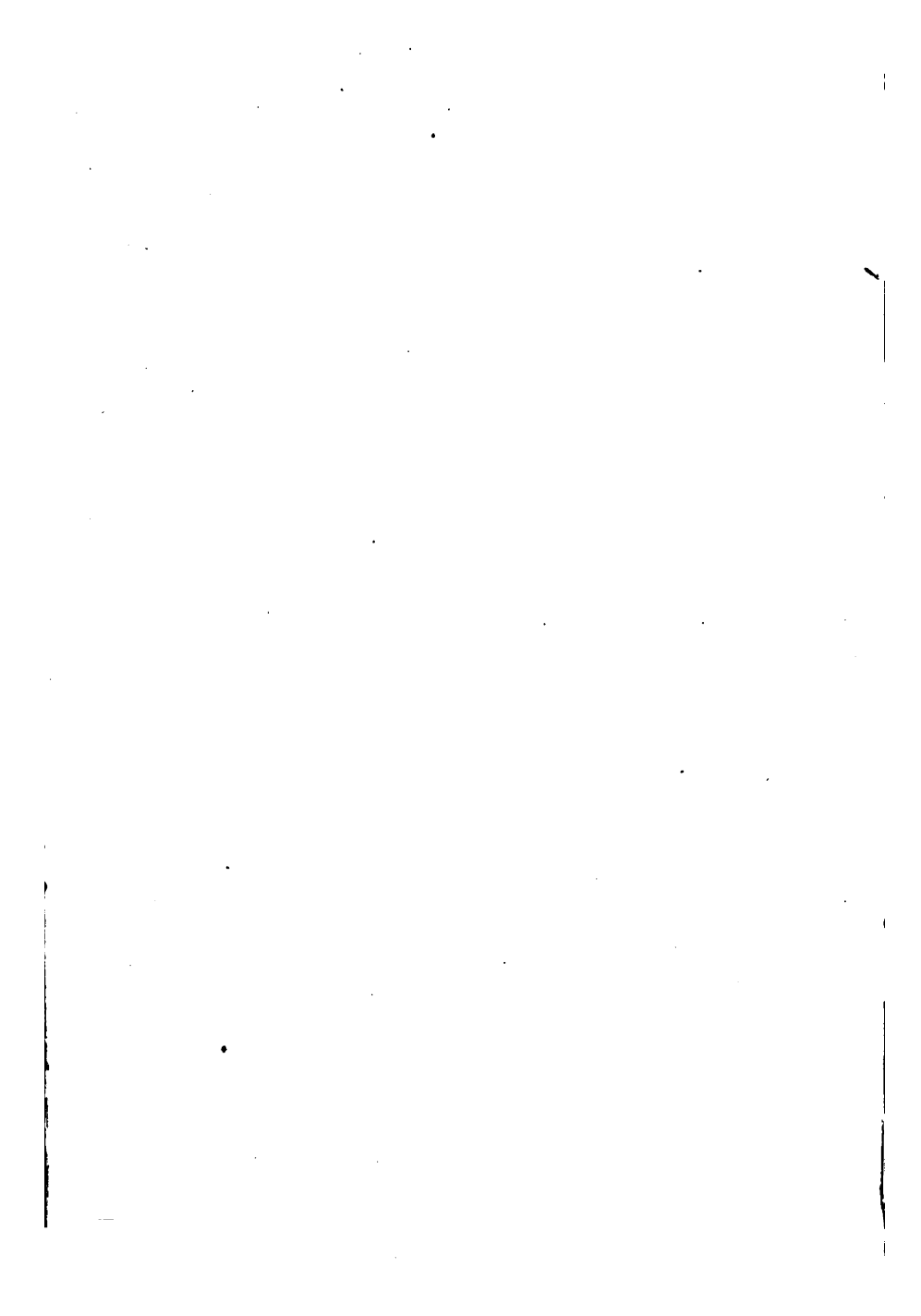
1. No subject.

50

(-G-M-s)



**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A MANCHESTER
COTTON MANUFACTURER.**



not in RB
9/7 28 AK

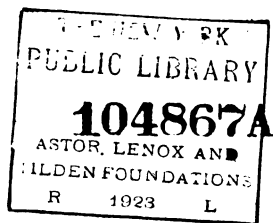
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF A MANCHESTER
COTTON MANUFACTURER;
OR,
THIRTY YEARS' EXPERIENCE OF
MANCHESTER.

By H. S. G.
T

O MORTAL man! who livest here by toll,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate:
That, like an emmet, thou must ever moli,
Is a sad sentence of an early date:
And, certes, there is for it reason great:
For though sometimes it makes thee weep and wail
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late,
Withouthen that would come a heavier hale—
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

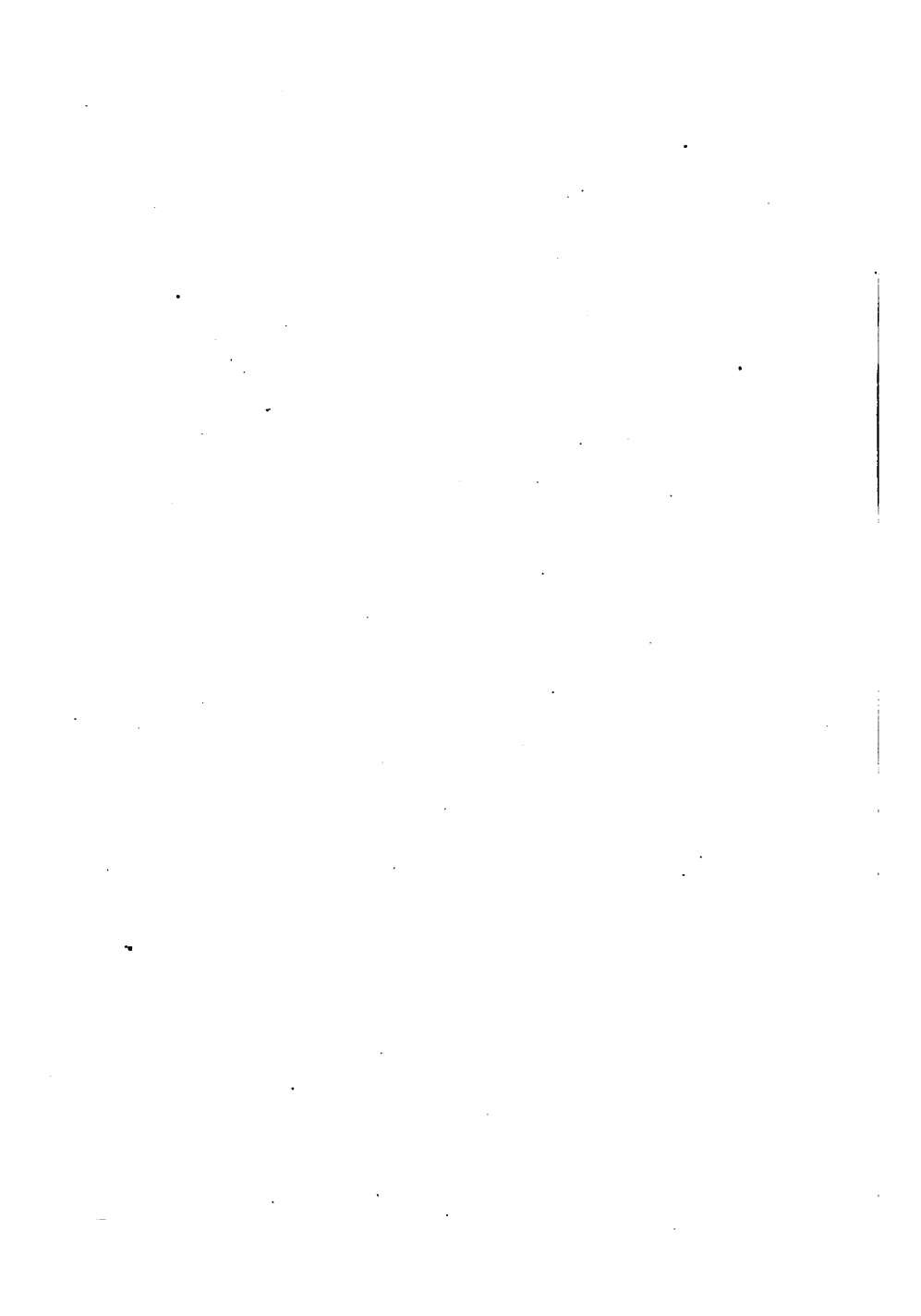
—CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

JOHN HEYWOOD,
DEANS GATE AND RIDGEFIELD, MANCHESTER;
AND 11, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS,
LONDON.
1887.



Eaterton, 13 Jul., 1923

TO
FIDUS ACHATES,
WHO, WHETHER IN THE SUNSHINE OF PROSPERITY
AND PHYSICAL VIGOUR;
OR DURING THE SHADOWS OF ADVERSITY,
ACCOMPANIED BY DESPONDENCY AND FAILING HEALTH;
OR, AGAIN, WHEN SEPARATED BY HALF OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE,
HAS EVER PROVED HIMSELF MY CONSTANT AND TRUE FRIEND,
THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY
THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

MY DEAR ———

When you intimated to me that the history of my life and doings in Lancashire would provide sufficient materials for a volume, and that it would be both interesting and instructive to a large number of readers, I regarded the suggestion as a fanciful one on the part of him who uttered it, and the subject vanished from my mind.

Since that time I have found myself in another hemisphere, amid surroundings unlike anything before experienced, and I also find my mind continually dwelling upon my past life, even from its earliest remembered days, so much so, and with such force, as to recall your words.

I have therefore, in accordance with your suggestion, endeavoured to place on record, in a familiar manner, such incidents of my history as I hoped might, to some extent, realize your predictions of their efficacy to interest, and perhaps instruct and also amuse, some at least of those who peruse these pages.

I could not, however, in these reminiscences, avoid dealing with my life from its commencement, but I have carefully abstained from devoting more than a limited notice of that portion of it which preceded my Lancashire career.

Hoping your prediction will be verified, and that my book will find many readers, especially in Lancashire,

I am, with undiminished regard,

Your old friend,

H. S. G.

*Excelsior Chambers,
13, Elizabeth Street,
Melbourne, Victoria,
January 20, 1886.*

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL DAYS 1

First appearance—My parents—Their good looks—Miniature portraits—Brothers and sisters—Question of parental resemblance—Locksbrook—A fascinating stream—A rash step—Splashing incident—Food for fishes—Damp experience—A disappointed excursion—Angry scoldings—A good Samaritan—Birth of a sister—Early school days at Bath—Chapel row—Green park buildings—Fives and leap-frog—Neglect of lessons—Punishments—A ferrule—Its description—Its application—Effective in raising the temperature—Bristol and Exeter railway—Opening of the line—The five locomotives—Bath enervating—Visit to Wiltshire—Death of my father—Desires for independence—Politics—Anti-Corn Law League—Cobden and Bright—Hungarian revolution—Kossuth, Bem, Dembinski—General Hayman at Barclay and Perkins—Lord Palmerston.

CHAPTER II.

REMOVAL TO LANCASHIRE—FIRST DAYS IN A COTTON MILL..... 16

Invitation to Lancashire—Leave West of England—The journey—View of Stockport—Speculations—Greetings—First visit to a cotton mill—Mr. and Mrs. Thornton—A well-kept residence—A disappointed smoker—Discarded churchwardens—A fatal alarm—Neglect of viands—Dress of Lancashire operatives—Sounds of clogs—Depressing effect of mill inspection before breakfast—A literary engineer—First letter home—Further experience—A second letter—Installation at mill—Early rising—Food a necessity—Arrival of wardrobe—Difficulty of domiciling—A peninsular hero and heroine—Domestic differences—Indulgences—Feline and canine—A weird spectacle—Forgetfulness to honour and obey—Cruelty to a dumb animal—Righteous indignation—Limited accommodation—A remarkable trio—A sight for Shakspeare.

CHAPTER III.

A MANUFACTURER'S DIFFICULTIES—ROUTINE OF A MILL 32

Close attention—Early rising—Daily routine—Poetry in an engine-house—Contemplation of a beam engine at work—Warbling weavers—A friendship—Old machinery—Disappointments—Regard for Mr. Thornton—His difficulties—Efforts for amelioration—Yarn and cloth—Cotton mixings—Eye for the raw material—Dismissal of Reginald—Undertake his duties—Formidable wages book—Two hours' work before breakfast—Whituntide holidays—Visit home—Satisfactory letters—Bristol merchants—Difficulty in distinguishing twins—Intent on Manchester—Working too hard—Another machine like myself for thirty years—Clock-like regularity—Necessity for ship canal—Losing flesh—A seaside visit—Recuperation—Change of quarters—The Cromptons—In clover—Vicar of Bolton—Pianoforte—Partridge—Albus Banham—His delightful visit—His love of music—Haydn, Mozart, and Bach—His departure—His letter.

CHAPTER IV.

PAGE

THE EXHIBITION OF 1851—ANTI-CORN LAW LEADERS—KOSSUTH 45

A clever stranger—His notes at the mill—His familiarity with Mr. Thornton—Mr. Hepworth Dixon—Great exhibition of 1851—Mr. Hepworth Dixon a commissioner to Manchester—The *Daily News*—Visit to the exhibition—Kearsley weavers making cloth in the exhibition building—No advantage in teaching the foreigner to weave—Mill entertainments—Our soiree—"The feast of reason and the flow of soul"—Difficulty of making a satisfactory speech—Clever speech of Gabriel Goldney—The cut-looker—Mr. Thornton long winded—Soiree at Albion Hotel—Cobden, Bright, Milner Gibson, and George Wilson—George Wilson's genius as a chairman—Recognition of faces not before seen—The Roman hierarchy—Mr. Bright's apple rind—Kossuth and Dr. Vaughan—Enthusiastic Hungarian sympathisers—Missing the tipler's train—Loss of a ride—A dark journey on foot—A short night's rest—Meeting the human clock—Wages book finished by breakfast time.

CHAPTER V.

THE QUEEN'S VISIT—MUSIC IN MANCHESTER—A FACTORY FIRE 53

Visit of Queen to Manchester—Loyalty of Lancashire people—Moses Gates station—Fear of missing sight of royalty—Outside railway fare—A novel journey—Smaash of umbrella—Narrow escape—God Save the Queen by 20,000 children in unison—Old Mechanics' Institute in Cooper Street—Messrs. Weston, Delavanti, and Perrin—Mrs. Sunderland and Mrs. Winterbottom—Mr. Charles Halle—One of his early performances in Manchester—Stirring mill incidents—Women have fits—Strapping—Scalping—A mill fire—Alarming chorus—Consternation of Workpeople—Lack of presence of mind—First shock of fright—Reaction—Appalling aspect of room in flames—Engineer's courage and devotion—His personal indifference to sparks—"Clay, clay"—Great demand for it—Fuddling under difficulties—A stand-up fight—Fire appeased—Mr. Rideout and the Duke of Sutherland—A deserved baronetcy—A wife's disappointment—Insurance salvage—Burnt cotton in favour—A successful transaction—A new idea—Leave Kearsley and go to Manchester.

CHAPTER VI.

MANAGING A MANCHESTER WAREHOUSE 64

Tender leave-takings—Mr. Edward Phelps—His fine old line engravings—Intellectual recreations—A smart young clerk—The ready-reckoner—Transformation of office to a breakfast room—Manchester routine—Collecting—Smartness required in the operation—The last of a line of 150 collectors—Sympathy with them as a class—The necessary qualifications—A good-natured cashier—A brusque buyer—Shortcomings—Allowances—Pre-eminence of Manchester in money transactions—Our staff—A new salesman—Mr. William Brownrigg—His vivacity and knowledge of buyers and their ways—Our new customers—Aspirations for eminence—Examination of stock—Brownrigg an artist in his way—Division of labour—In conflict with Mr. Thornton—An old cashier—Inappropriate jokes—Three wives.

CHAPTER VII.

FOREIGN CUSTOMERS—VISIT TO A COUNTRY MILL 76

A Levant customer—A profitable pattern—A wealthy cotton lord—Keen eyes of a Greek merchant—Middlemen an expensive luxury—Manchester

Greeks an honourable community—No rule without an exception—A large manufacturing concern—William Renshaw—Partiality towards him—His unexpected visit—A pleasant drive—Passing view of mills—Mill brass bands—Their excellence—Introduction to a large family—Rounds of visits—Quiet breakfasts—Inspection of mills—Acres of flooring—Fine weaving facilities—A touch of envy—A comfortable kitchen—A commodious fire-place—A Bible student—Pianos and pictures—Fast mares and trotters—A vinous escape—A famous refuge—Appreciation of a good lodging—Imitation of home—Oxford Road—Advantages of a small room—An unhappy couple—Early wakening—Assistance to bed—An odd white kid glove—Greenheys popular with young men—Park street in 1854 almost rural—Mary Barton—A perfect room—Attempt at flattery—Successful scheming—A removal.

PAGE

CHAPTER VIII.

MANCHESTER IN THE TIME OF THE CRIMEAN WAR 86

An anxious time—War looming—Its dreaded consequences—Cotton soon affected—Tendency to fall in price—Admiral Sir Charles Napier and Mr. D. Urquhart at the Corn Exchange—A frail old gentleman between a bellicose pair—a British lion and a Bengal tiger in Cottonopolis—Threatening aspects—An uproar—An imaginary orchestra—An unexpected calm—Boanerges—Vox et præterita—nihîl—Dr. Vaughan—War with Russia—Its effects in Manchester—Affects us adversely—Loss of the "Prince"—The Athenæum—Its attractions for young men—Its library, concerts, classes, debating society—A youthful orator and embryo statesman—The best weekly paper—Continued business depression—Habit second nature—Heavy expenses—Ideas of separation—Mr. Thornton resides in Manchester—A Sunday disappointment—Hors-de-combat—Acquaintance with a doctor—Blisters one and two—Nocturnal financing—Sudden flight—Maternal solicitude—Sorrow endureth for a night, joy cometh in the morning—Doctor's congratulations—Making an effort—Unexpected meeting—Change of scene—Nephews and nieces—An occasional genius—Alfius Banham a paterfamilias—His pretty cottage—Stonehenge—"De'll aura tua profetica"—Second invitation to Lancashire—I go to reside with Mr. Thornton—Wholesale dismissals—A new departure—A start.

CHAPTER IX.

CONTINUANCE OF THE RUSSIAN WAR—LIFE IN A MANCHESTER SUBURB 100

A business circular—Good list of names—A house and a buyer—Quid-nuncs—Well-laid plans—Abortive efforts—A favourite maker—Commissions not popular—One thousand pounds sterling—Its capabilities—A favourite fabric—Croydons—"White" men—Their disinterestedness—Encouragement of early efforts—Dearth of material—A failure at cornering and sudden leave-taking—Brownrigg's curiosity—Continuance of Russian war—Lord Palmerston takes office—Satisfactory stocktaking—Mr. Thornton improved in health—His festive occasions—Friendships formed at his house—J. S. Baring—His good looks—Our mutual regard and subsequent friendship—Mr. Thornton returns to Kearsley—His crushing cares—Leave-taking—Greenheys again—A boudoir—A young German professor—Power over passing pedestrians—Classical compositions—Stephen Heller—A rural suburb—Reside with Renshaw—Competition—A larger bookcase, a semi-grand, absorption of music—Transactions in Art—An untoward circumstance—Horse-flesh—Dairy Farm privileges—A handsome turn-out—Irish groom—Threatened obesity—Unwelcome visitors—Speedy relief—Renshaw's disgust and exit.

CHAPTER X.

PAGE

THE ART TREASURES EXHIBITION—CHARLES HALLE—OPERA. 110

Fine Art Treasures Exhibition—"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever"—The Old Trafford omnibus—First glance at the pictures—Curious effect—Gainsborough's "Blue Boy"—Vandyke's "Charles I. on horseback"—Charles Halle's orchestra—Its origin and formation—Its present increased strength and efficiency—Thoughts on hearing their performance of Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*—Continues to delight the public—A distinguished member of the orchestra—His early death and loss to Manchester—Moravian school at Fairfield—The genial principal, Mr. Höhn—His diversity of gifts—The disaster—Treatment by the tongue—The poet's relief—A poem with a moral—Operas—*Fidelio* with Tamberlik—*Il Trovatore* in Manchester—Graziani and Tamberlik—Unprecedented demand for *Il balen* and *Ah, che la morte* the next day—*Don Giovanni* a favourite opera in Manchester—Mario as Don Giovanni—Beletti's pre-eminence as a vocalist—Giuglini's singing of "Il mio tesoro"—The first tenor of his day—A hitch at the end of *Don Giovanni* performance—Herr Formes declining an encore—Bosio—An unexpected *douceur*—Cheap day at the Art Treasures—Systematic inspection.

CHAPTER XI.

A CRISIS IN TRADE—ART PURCHASES 121

Mr. F. Moregood—His happy manner—His business transactions—Introduces me to Mr. Tumbleton—The small office at his mill—Individuality of character—Change of intentions—Close of Art Treasures Exhibition—Reflections thereon—A visit to a manufacturer—Preaching and Theology—An approaching crisis—A gloomy balance sheet—A good sale by auction—The end of a cotton concern—A crisis of three months—A crisis of nine years—A fortunate decision—A fine art dealer—A friendship of thirty years—Fine print collecting—A lover of art for its own sake—Rowlandson's sketches—Sir Joshua Reynolds' engravings—A lucky doctor—Remarkable sketch by David Cox—An eager partner—A hydro-pathic establishment—Timely relief.

CHAPTER XII.

PARTNERSHIP WITH A MANUFACTURER—AN ANCOATS MILL... 130

The crisis of 1857—Introductions on the Exchange—Lancashire men plain spoken—Jokes and home-thrusts—An introduction leaving a pleasant memory—Tumbleton's workpeople compared with those of Thornton—Building unsuited for weaving—Our number of looms—Excessive vibration—Rocking of the building—Fright of the workpeople—Their escape to the street to avoid a collapse—The remedy—Rods and bolts—Not altogether steady—Visits from strangers—The effect upon them—Their speedy retreat—Fairbairn's steam engine—Mr. Tumbleton's long visit to the Malvern establishment—His enthusiastic letters describing the treatment—Daily baths—Douchings and dripping sheets—Lectures on the epidemics—Fidus Achates—His father—Advantages from a love of the divine art—A noble nature—His loss to the Exchange and the community—Fidus Achates still in correspondence recalling pleasant memories—Mr. Thornton nominates, constitutes, and appoints me his lawful attorney, and sails for New Zealand.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEW FRIENDS 137

Mrs. Alison—Her husband—His dances and dinner parties—Music and muffins—His activity and impetuosity—His wealth and whims—Old

port and Durham mustard—An *à priori* case—Swallowing two shillings and sixpence—Thinking like a sage and acting like a Samaritan—Doubtful views on smoking—Decided effects of Latakia—John Brindlebury—A mother's aspiration—A dutiful son—Routine of a Manchester cotton palace—Putting the shoulder to the wheel—Bleached calico—Climbing to fortune—Over-taxed nature—A break-down—A rebellious spirit—Congenial work—Happy hours with the arts and music—John Volummus—His mild-mannered ancestor—A failure and a rescue—Talent and tact—A fine presence—Animal spirits—A misleading medical referee—Life insurance—Doctors differ—A clever agent—A splendid conformation—Interminable premiums—Eusebius Pigott—A handsome young Irishman—Oil largely in consumption—Good oil business leads to fortune—A friendly invitation—A pleasant Sunday—Puseyism in Manchester—Clerical bigotry—Animadversions—Reflections in Manchester—Dead March in Saul—Irishmen not bad fellows—I am half a one myself—Harewood and Pigott—Insurance business—A lofty situation—Daily stair mountings—Advantage of a fine voice—Destiny.

CHAPTER XIV.

GOOD TRADE IN DOMESTICS—SOME LADY FRIENDS..... 149

Three months of douching and dripping—A reduced physique—Long yarns—An unexpected bad cold—Subsidence of enthusiasm—Tumbleton and Co. go ahead—A fine demand for heavy domestics—Manchester merchants exclusive—An old Bristol friend—Short-lived transactions—A prying youth—Mr. Tumbleton has time for visits, sermons, and lectures—Changes his residence—Misgivings and reflections—Sudden death of Mrs. Tumbleton and fortitude of her husband—Mrs. Airlie—Mrs. Cowper—Mrs. Gower—Mother and daughters—An old retainer of fifty years—"The young ladies"—An attractive household—A welcome visitor—Neglect of lodgings—Mrs. Cowper's escape—A wonderful recovery—Robert Frere—His wife—His warm-heartedness—His careful nursing—Mrs. Airlie's death—Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wentworth—Their near relationship to the Freres—My frequent visits to them—Such friendships rare—Mrs. Frere's death—Increased intimacy with Robert—Late visits—Early morning returns—Mills firing up—Death of Mrs. Wentworth—The sisters not long divided.

CHAPTER XV.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR AND THE COTTON FAMINE..... 160

Prosperity of the mill—Increased earnings of workpeople—Weavers flock to us from other parts—Good trade—All hands to the wheel—Portentous outlook in America—Abraham Lincoln—Excitement at Charlestown—Secession of South Carolina from the Union—Civil war—Mistakes entertained of its endurance—Cotton advanced 300 per cent—Early successes of the South—Mr. Gladstone on the Southern confederacy—Timid operators appearing on the scene—Cotton two shillings and threepence per pound—Distress in Lancashire and our own neighbourhood—The organising rector—His powers of toll and endurance seeming to go on for ever—His zeal and benevolence—A tithe of income too small for the calls of charity—A new parish church—Shattered health—Resignation—Recollections of some of his deeds—One of the sewing classes—Mr. Tumbleton's benevolent turn—His passion for church building—His collection of trowels—The supper party—Eulogium on the attractive display—Tumbleton and Company's claim for a share of it—Delicate health—Desires to withdraw—The rocking tendencies frighten partners away—The Matlock hydropathic establishment—Alternate Northern and Southern successes—Their effect on the price of cotton—Workpeople's aversion to Surat cotton—Its high value—The prayer meeting—"But not Surat"—Sir Charles Wood—The deputation—Rottenness of the India Board—A substitute for wood.

CHAPTER XVI.

PAGE

OLD AND NEW ACQUAINTANCES—DISTRESS IN ANCOATS..... 172

Mr. Thornton's return from New Zealand—His good health—Otherwise the visit of no advantage—Difficulty of re-entering the groove after a long absence—Oil and insurance business—The "refuge for the destitute"—Mr. Moregood—His successful operations—His pocket-book—Method of business—A "lunge" and then a holiday—Meeting the new rector of St. J.—His ardour and hopefulness—His clerical relationships—Love for the working man—His talent power—A slight figure—A man after the people's hearts—Death of Alfus Banham—The cause—Consequences—Recollection of our attachment—Eusebius Pigott—His latchkey—Its absence when wanted—The deaf landlady—The midnight hour—The refuge—An inventive genius—The murderous bullet—The marvellous railway signal—Harewood's complaints—Todhunter—Grumbings and Groanings—"Dead March" a restorative only for a season—Continuance of poverty seen in the faces of the people—Little children the greatest sufferers from insufficient food—Cotton relief fund—Two millions sterling received on behalf of it—The "George Griswold"—Its effects upon the hearts as well as the stomachs of the people—Mr. Cogan—The Destitute Children's Dinner Society—Spread of the movement—Its success—Mr. Thomas Wright, the prison philanthropist—His testimony—The school teacher's evidence—Mr. Wright's blessing—Another institution of great value to convalescents—Its enterprising conductor—The necessity of funds for success—Mr. Tumbleton's unexpected appearance—Announcement of his approaching marriage—A work of art.

CHAPTER XVII.

FLUCTUATIONS IN COTTON—PICTURE COLLECTING AND SALES ... 183

Continued scarcity of cotton—Fluctuation in prices—Our mill a small one, but worked with vigour—Fidus Achates equal to the exigencies of the times—His ability to make a silk purse from a sow's ear—Our large business with him—An eminent firm of spinners at Rochdale—Their skill in keeping up the standard of quality with inferior fibre—Our large business with them—An Easter holiday with Fidus Achates—Anglesea—A short rest—The pub, the refreshing draught—The London "Times"—The battle—Disquietude—Fall in price—The next battle—A reaction—Mr. Tumbleton's renewed health after marriage—A wise choice—A new lease of life—A ten years' partnership—The new firm—The morning drive to town—Irwell House a centre of attraction—John Wesley's wig—Mr. Brown's repatee—Mr. Rareworthy—An accumulation of Drawings—Mr. Christie, jun.—Christie Manson's—A Turner gem—A David Cox treasure—A De Wint marvel—Prices of drawings—Art transactions—"The triumph of faith"—Mr. Rareworthy—His daily loves—An enthusiastic old gentleman in art—His eulogiums and denunciations—His impetuous eloquence—Mrs. Cowper and Mrs. Alison—They reside together—Mrs. Cowper leaves us and is soon followed by her friend—The retainer follows his mistress—Mrs. Gower only remains—Death of my mother—Her peaceful latter years.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHURCH WORK IN ANCOATS—REMOVAL TO CHESHIRE 193

A falling market the bane of the manufacturer—He suffers more than the agent or the merchant—Short time a questionable specific—Total stoppage a certain loss—Another crisis successfully passed—Good business notwithstanding deficient wheat harvests—Looms well employed—Reduced prices of 1870—Mr. Tumbleton bids farewell to Manchester—Takes a "cottage by the sea"—Unique ceremony—Four foundation stones—A fine structure—Successful services—An additional trowel—The last church—The last

residence—Faithfulness to hydropathy—The keepers of the house tremble—Hydropathy all very good, but the watchfulness of a good wife better—The telegram—The visit—The invalid—Faithfulness in hydropathy to the last—The parish of St. J.—The able young Rector—His labours—His health—His doctor's commands—His timely escape—His new parish—Its large extent—Its wealth—The church and her clergy—A parish like St. J. good for an apprenticeship—The rector builds churches and schools in his new parish—The testimonial—The flow of wisdom—Yards of silk—Mounting a chair—Railway viaduct at Southport—New journeyings—Limited holidays—Cheshire air—Pure milk—Cow-keeping—Mr. Thornton's welcome visits—Conversation of old times and troubles—His love for New Zealand—Mrs. Gower's visits—Rev. J. T. Pollard—His compressed knowledge—Supremacy in muscularity—Dangerous antagonist—Good friend—Boils the old woman's kettle—Browbeats the young woman's tyrant—"Hands off"—His theories—Clerical opportunities—The northern vicar—Friend of the helpless—Terror of the bully.

CHAPTER XIX.

DISASTROUS TRADE—CLOSING AND SALE OF THE MILL..... 205

Consideration of the new position—Offers of partnership—Timely legacies—Dearthness of cotton and machinery—A high valuation—Continued good business—I begin "to reap the toil of this my hard estate"—1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, four years of real good business—Mr. Thornton's congratulation—Poets not infallible—Dame Fortune—"Ducks and drakes"—1877, a change—Trade arrested—Bad harvests—Russian war with Turkey—Advice from a travelling friend—Prophetic utterances—Hopes of the trade—Goods going out of consumption—Foreigners cease buying—Mr. Moregood, his perplexity—Sale of Pictures—The intelligent manager of the Fine Art Gallery—The Exhibition—"See David Cox and De Wint, and die"—Exhibition a success—Affected by the Preston strikes—Relief of a visit to the Gallery after 'Change—Failures and rumours of failures—1878, failures amount to thirty two and a half millions sterling—Thinkers at work—Fair trade and free trade—Reciprocity, its advocates and opponents, their arguments—The cup of gloom—The auction, sale of cloth—A new departure—The end of an eminent firm—Further period of commercial darkness—Not easy to close an old-established mill—Dismissal of workpeople a trying ordeal—Keep working so long as funds hold out—Picture collecting a preservation from extinction—Their temporary want of intrinsic value—1880, failing health—Visit to Keynsham—Mr. Thornton—His illness—My last visit to him—Too ill to attend his funeral—Wholesome reflections on the character of a good man—His truthfulness and unselfishness—Weaving out the last warps—Grief of workpeople—The deputation—Their self-denying offers—The climax—The close—Ghastly placards—Hors de combat—The auction—No buyers—The owner seriously ill—Doctors and medicine unavailing—Doctor orders my removal from Manchester—Reflections and comparison with similar removal twenty-five years earlier—A series of visits—My friend Pollard—His devices and stratagems—The vicarage—The lawn—Protection from the sun—Dr. Oakley's chant—The 78th Psalm—Fifteenth evening of the month—A minor third—A stratagem—Effect of dollemaniera—Continuation of visits—Return to Manchester after a long absence.

CHAPTER XX.

DEPARTURE FOR AUSTRALIA..... 217

In the great city again—No longer a cotton manufacturer—Thirty years of steady progress—Out of the race—Trade profitless—No prospect of return to prosperity—The absence of old firms—Three years' losses of the trade reaching nineteen millions sterling—Their effects—Another effort—A forlorn hope—Denudation at every step—Heavy cost of the final

plunge—Eusebius—Our meeting at the Rectory—His sympathy—His astonishment—His regrets—His affection—His gratitude—His generosity—His encouragement—His trust in Providence—Clouds with silver linings—Return of the happy times—The night's visit—The contemplated week's ramble—Au revoir—The epistle—Reiteration on paper—Pleasant prospects—Waiting for the happy week—Waiting still—O, Eusebius, Eusebius!—Mr. Moregood—His two letters—His last visit—The pencil autograph—Sudden removal—Another friend gone—The farewell club dinner—Splendid repast—The good-hearted chairman—The eloquent vice-chairman—Pious exaggerations—Fourteen good speeches—How little the speakers knew of my future—Dr. Fraser—a co-trustee of St. J.—Interview with him—His cordiality—His thanks—His blessing—His letter to the Bishop of Tasmania—Death of Bishop Fraser—Sorrow at the tidings in Melbourne—Difficulties of a future Bishop—The Rector of St. J.—His people's regard—Time and tide wait for no man—Hours in Cottonopolis numbered—The testimonial—Cherished volumes—Mental visions—St. J. Church—The dispensary—Sound of looms—The mill once more—The narrow staircase—John Rathway—Piscatorial eminence—The regulation stool—Last leave-taking—Mr. Rareworthy—His daughter—The Editor's son—Image of the youthful orator of twenty-five years earlier—Visit in Piccadilly—*Vice versa* from an old acquaintance—Last friend in the cab—London Road station—yet another friend in railway uniform—The right compartment—Farewell Manchester—Manchester relations compared with thirty-three years earlier—Path still the same—Then conducting in—Now a departing path—Discharge of duty—Exercise of faith—Past results embodied with the future and influence the existence as a whole—The contemplation a satisfactory one.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF A MANCHESTER

COTTON MANUFACTURER.

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL DAYS.

I WAS born in the year of the Catholic Emancipation Bill, at 12, Great Stanhope Street, Bath, in the county of Somerset, where for many generations my ancestors on my father's side flourished. My mother was a lady of Irish birth. I have frequently heard from those who knew them that at the time of their marriage they were considered the best-looking couple in the city. If any proof were wanted of the truth of this statement it was corroborated satisfactorily to my own mind by the contemplation of two miniature portraits, executed by Scovell, a celebrated artist of the time, and which for some years, at a later period, were in my possession.

We were now four children, consisting of Fanny, the eldest; William, the eldest boy; Walter

Ormsby; and myself, the baby. There were two other little brothers, who died ere I came upon the scene.

It appears that I differed from the rest of the children in feature and conformation, resembling more my mother's side of the house; whilst the others approached that of my father. In this, however, I think there was some miscalculation, for as I grew up I thought I resembled my pater very much indeed. If I could not boast more than a very small portion of his good looks, there were other matters I claimed to inherit from him, notably my love of Art and Music. My father was a pupil of John Varley, who was the master of W. H. Hunt, Turner of Oxford, John Linnell, F. O. Finch, and others, and made dexterous use of his brush. He was also a good musician, and sang and played with cultivated taste. In my own case I could, when four years of age, sketch from nature objects animate and inanimate, and extemporize in any key on the pianoforte. Here, I thought, were sufficient reasons to establish, to some extent, an equality of resemblance with the other small fry.

There were two children born after me. Both were girls. They were sweet, lovely children, and my heart aches, even at this distance of time, in the remembrance of their early deaths—Esther at fourteen and Bessie at twelve years of age. As I was only two years older than Esther, the three of us were playmates, and only those who have experienced similar bereavements can realize the anguish I felt in parting first with Bessie and then with Esther. It was

a heart-breaking separation. One of the earliest events of my life which I can remember, but which I remember well, happened on a fifth of July, when I was four years old. The mother, for good reasons, sent the children for a walk into the country, it being a delightful summer day. Our little party consisted of my big sister Fanny, my brother Walter (William was not with us), and my sister Esther, who was two years old, and had frequently to be carried by the nursemaid who accompanied us, and whose name was Betsey Murlice. After the usual bribes to be good, of lollypops and gingerbread, we proceeded on our way along the road between Bath and Bristol. I can see the little party now in my mind's eye, headed by my august sister Fanny, winding its way along the pavement of the wide thoroughfare, busy with market carts and other vehicles going to and fro, and which trafficked between the two cities. I remember also Fanny's look of satisfaction, on our near approach to a village called Locksbrook, that she had so far conducted her convoy without mishap. No doubt she was contemplating a happy hour or two of sylvan delight under some celebrated trees growing on elevated ground, beneath which flowed the winding, picturesque river Avon, passing through the village called Kelstone, where young people from the sister cities often met to picnic and exchange glances. Of whatever she was thinking she gave a sigh of relief expressive of her thankfulness that up to the present moment we were all there without a hitch. Poor Fanny? She did not think that the pretty stream called Locksbrook was so attractive

to little boys! Her object was to reach the lovely elms at Kelstone, sit beneath their branches on the grass, and deal us out bread and butter and milk contained in a bottle, from the pretty satchel which was carefully carried by one of the party.

Accordingly the whole of them, except myself, proceeded along the road, crossing the little bridge which spanned the attractive brook, in perfect ignorance of my being unable to follow them except under compulsion. There, a few feet below the road, ran the delicious gurgling water. Who, with a soul, could resist its loveliness on such a warm sunny day? I had a soul, and I could not resist! There was the singing, joyous stream, and there were also some little boys who, like myself, appreciated the water, flying backwards and forwards across the brook like kingfishers. It was, indeed, too sublime for an urchin to resist. No, the boys did not fly—they went across on “stepping stones,” from one side to the other again and again. They seemed only to fly from the spot where I stood. It was heavenly exercise! I had never seen anything like it in my limited experience. Without hesitation, fear, or calculation, I found myself at the edge of the stream—in another moment on the first stone—then on the second. I never knew if I reached the third. I may have done so. Suddenly I was in a new existence, never before experienced. I was moving, yet stationary; warm, yet cold; on the earth with the feeling of being off it. The fact was, my impetuosity had whirled me from the stones to the bed of the stream, and after a tumble or two I reached the other side. The water was

not more that a foot or so in depth, and I was on the opposite bank in a short time, though I felt as if I had been a month in making the passage. Poor Fanny! The shouts of the children attracted her notice, and on looking back she beheld me, awe-struck, and although on *terra firma*, yet in that outward condition denoting that I might have been food for fishes. Poor little fishes! There must have been lots of minnows there, with frogs and tadpoles. I wonder if they were frightened when I splashed through their domain! Perhaps they were disgusted with me for disturbing them, and regretted they were not sharks to have eaten me up and put a stop to any future similar exploits! Farewell now to the visions of picnic under the Kelstone elms! What was to be done, with a child wet from head to foot—for I think I fell several times in crossing the brook—three miles from home, and the son of parents so inveterately opposed to even a shower of rain that they seldom left home without an umbrella? Oh, the responsibility of Fanny at that moment! As for myself, I had gone through such a variety of feelings during these moments that I seemed proof against any amount of scolding, though plenty of it followed from Fanny, and also the nursemaid, who thought it necessary to say something derogatory to my dignity. For a short time I did not even feel remorse. At last, however, the scolding kept on at such a rate that there really seemed a prospect that I should be put to death immediately on my arriving at home, unless in the meantime (happy thought!) I could be conveyed to the house of

some good Samaritan who would change my clothes for me and give me a drying. Fortunately for us all, such a one was soon found in the person of an old woman who dealt in "lollypops," and who was known to my sister, who loved "lollies," and was acquainted with most of the traders therein for miles around. In the cottage of this old lady I soon found myself seated in a long backed chair, opposite to a blazing fire, divested of my damp garments and my feet and legs enclosed in a pair of very long stockings belonging to the woman herself. I must have looked the picture of misery and touched the heart of my benefactress, who effectually stopped my groanings with one of the gingerbread articles by which she was attractively surrounded.

We arrived home in due course, and the first intelligence we received was that we had a new little sister. I thus escaped punishment, and my sister Bessie's birthday was always afterwards identified with the Locksbrook "stepping stones" event. My dear sister Fanny (who has lately passed from us, and who lived to see one of her grandchildren, Toodie, at nearly three times the age I was when all this occurred) for some years lived with her family within a few miles of Locksbrook, and was frequently driven by her husband, in their comfortable open phaeton, between the two cities, on each occasion passing the old spot, which is little altered. Her husband tells me she never arrived at the place without asking him to stop the horse. When he had pulled up she would recall the circumstance, briefly telling the story, whilst pointing out to any visiting

friend who might be accompanying them on a visit to Bath, the portion of the stream where it and the "stepping stones" proved so irresistible.

When I was five years old I was sent to the same school as that attended by my brother Walter, who was two years my senior. This school was kept for young ladies and gentlemen by an antiquated and aristocratic looking dame called Hiscocks. Miss Hiscocks kept her establishment on the first floor upstairs, in a melancholy-looking house in a narrow street called Chapel Row. The chapel of ease (I forget the name) was opposite to the school, but showed only a bare black wall, without even a window to break its monotony. Here, in company with boys and girls of my own age or thereabouts, I learned to spell and read. I don't remember if we did anything else. I have a vivid remembrance of committing to memory, amongst other things, the fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, which taxed me considerably, and also Cowper's little poem of "The Chameleon." I never hear the Sermon on the Mount read that I do not again find myself a chick of five in Chapel Row. At one end of this thoroughfare was Charles Street, which led to and across New King Street to Green Park Buildings. On the other side it conducted to Queen Square. To the former fascinating locality I often betook myself for the indulgence of "fives," played against the gable of one of the houses, and "leap-frog," instead of attending on the old dame, who expected us punctually when the school opened. When I once found myself in Green Park Buildings, I seemed to lose all power of returning to my

duties. The locality held me spellbound, and I became known as a truant. There was no difficulty in knowing where to find me. There was a little boy named Street, a schoolfellow, whose parents resided in Green Park Buildings, and who occasionally treated Walter and myself to an inspection of his home and toys, the contemplation of which afforded us agreeable reflection for weeks afterwards. We were never able to discover what became of him. He was an attractive little fellow, and formed a topic for forty years afterwards.

I was not allowed to remain very long at this seminary, and when nearly seven followed my brother—who always preceded me at the various establishments—to another school. This one was kept by a young man of imposing appearance. He was very tall, with luxurious hair, and possessed a remarkable voice. He was energetic, however, and worked hard with his thirty to forty pupils, some of whom were big fellows. I soon adapted myself to the new state of things, and before long it was apparent I possessed fair abilities. But I was idle, especially in the preparation of home lessons, which were habitually neglected, perhaps in part as my father kept me an hour or two every evening at drawing and sketching; and, though I hastily endeavoured, I was seldom successful in learning them during my morning journey to the school. If, unfortunately, there was any "leap-frog" going on outside the gates, so strong was my delight in its participation that I forgot all about my books and lessons, with the result that my memory had lost almost everything I had acquired on the journey from home. I now must

face the punishment for my neglect. The punishment at first consisted in being kept at my lessons during the dinner hour, minus the meal—a senseless way of punishing a growing boy, and one which once or twice brought on illness. My father had to request the master to punish me by some different method. So he substituted the ferule, of which we all thought he made too free a use, and as it appeared to us only when in a passion. At such times, when about to bring it into operation, his flowing hair would spread out like a mop head in the process of wringing; his nose, which was celestially inclined, would recede with such rapidity as to threaten his own brains; and his vice could be compared only to the combined sounds produced by the grinding of scissors and fying of soles. These were, however, as nothing compared with the hideous ferule, which was not an ordinary cane, but a piece of wood, rough on one side, with here and there a hole in it. It was about two feet long, an inch thick, and about two and a half inches wide. I noticed it was the rough side of the wood which generally met the unwilling head of the culprit. When the verdict of guilty had been recorded, and the sentence pronounced, there was nothing for it but to accept the application with what fortitude there was at command. The right hand of the victim is extended towards the master, as if soliciting the loan of a halfpenny, but not for that object, for the ends of the fingers are seized and tightly held to prevent flinching and also to keep the palm well open; and then down comes the instrument, once, twice, thrice, or four times, as the necessities of the case may demand.

I once saw a boy receive what appeared to me to be fifteen hundred strokes in the tenth part of a minute, so rapidly were they delivered. The hand is then released, and the individual, having expiated his offence, can return to his studies, somewhat humiliated and with the temperature of one hand considerably higher than that of the other.

The ferule, had its day, and its reign came to an end. It happened thus: A boy who, through one mishap and another, had rendered himself liable to an accumulated number of whacks, was ordered up to the master's desk to receive his due. From some cause or another the culprit did not move from his seat. He was requested a second time, but there was no sign of compliance. A third time he was asked if he did not hear the master's commands. Still no reply and no movement. Then began the combined sounds reminding one of the scissors grinding and sole frying. These threatening aspects should have caused the culprit to reconsider his position and hasten to satisfy the demands of pedagogic justice. But no—he remained sitting, as if there were no such thing as an offended majesty at hand, ready to explode in showers upon his devoted head. Our eyes were all now on the enraged master and then on the extraordinary individual who had so strangely and unaccountably defied him. What was to happen? The steam was up at the very highest pressure. If the safety valve do not act, if there be one, in a few seconds, time will be no more with any of us. Then followed a dead silence, the calm before the storm, when the drop of a

steel pen might be heard. It lasted, however, but for a few moments. Leaping from his stool, with a crash like the spire of a church might make which had become tired of remaining in its fixings and wanted a change, the master traversed the long room in only a few strides, and was behind the boy in no time. Then appeared a scene as grotesque as it was serious. The safety valve had indeed begun to act, but unlike the steam engine, which stops when the steam is let off, the master resembled the fly-wheel of the said machine when grinding away and all resistance is removed. It then what is termed "runs away" or "flies off." The arms of the master were like the arms of the fly-wheel revolving with giddy velocity around its centre, and in this instance the arms and the centre were in continual contact, so rapid were the revolutions. That centre was the boy's head! But even a runaway engine must come to the end of its course, and in time stand still: so it was in this instance. The thundering ceased, the governor balls hung idly all at once at their owner's side, and the church spire returned to its fixings in the old position. And the boy! Was he alive? Oh, yes! and in reply to my question afterwards, told me that after the first blow he really felt nothing, and that the "old gentleman" might have kept on for another five minutes for anything he cared. He was, however, inclined to be sick afterwards, and had headache. The boy's name was Holloway, if I remember correctly. He had inaugurated another era of judicature in the school. When the next time arrived for me to meet the penalty of misdeeds I adopted Holloway's method, with

the same experience and the same result—the scissors-and-soles sound, steam-engine and church-steeple performances encored. It was my last punishment. I think the master must have been struck with compunction on observing the pluck and fortitude displayed in the endurance of this rough treatment, and concluded we possessed qualities entitling us to a more honourable mode of correction. I saw little corporal punishment after this, that I can remember.

The school was a good one for boys not intended to be clergymen or to follow a learned profession. The three R's, with Latin and French, were the main subjects for study, and they were well taught. Mental arithmetic was a prominent feature in the curriculum. I have attributed the success of many movements and transactions in after life to the Friday afternoons which were devoted to its practice, at which times I could hold my own against all comers. Drawing and music were subjects not entertained for a moment in the mind of our chief, or doubtless he would have been more lenient in his treatment of one little fellow who seemed to spend an undue proportion of his time in delineating horse soldiers in action, on his slate, when he should have been tackling the rule-of-three and equations. I have often seen him punished for these delinquencies, and have mentally groaned on observing his hasty obliteration of those vigorous outlines of Circassian scimmages with Muscovites, which I thought should have been preserved in the British Museum. The idea that they should be thus lost for ever, and the author punished for producing them,

aroused my intense sympathy and disgust. A few years ago I visited, in London, the studio of one of our eminent painters, a leading member of the Royal Academy, whose pictures have realized higher prices at Christie & Manson's auction rooms than those of any other artist during his life-time. His memory was not so good as mine, or else he did not care to dwell on the early days, and the subject of the horse soldiers, and its consequences, was shelved in the contemplation of a work then on the easel, and which he was preparing for the Academy Exhibition of the following month. This picture was sold, the day after my visit, to an eminent firm for a very large sum.

Although a round, rosy-faced urchin, I was not very strong, and the climate of Bath, situated as it is, in a valley, had an enervating effect upon me; so after having had the whooping cough, and failing to recover strength, I was sent into a lovely nook in the heart of Wiltshire to recruit. The house, with its pretty gardens and orchard, to which I went, and which came up to my ideal of paradise, belonged to a friend of my parents, to whom he was greatly attached. I was initiated in the arts of haymaking, milking cows, and, what was better, riding a donkey, of which I had the exclusive control. These were events in my life. It was the first time I had left home. I remember my father providing me with pencils and paper that I might make him some sketches from nature before my return. I had other amusements, however, and do not remember that I made any drawings.

The opening of the line between Bath and

Exeter, on the Great Western Railway, was an exciting event, and aroused my liveliest interest. With my brother Walter, I never lost an opportunity of watching the passage of trains between Bath and Bristol. Few amongst succeeding generations can recall the period in their lives when, for the first time, they beheld a railway train. This privilege belonged to my brother and myself, who had read of locomotives and seen drawings of them, but had never witnessed the actual thing, and in motion. We became so familiar with the form of the engines in use on the line, which were limited to five, that their separate individuality was recognised when at a considerable distance. Each engine bore its name in conspicuous brass letters, and were called respectively the Arrow, Lynx, Stag, Dart, and Fireball. For some years the passenger traffic was not too great to be accomplished by that quintet of locomotives.

When fairly established in health I returned to school and fought on with the early difficulties, following my brother to a new establishment, where the study of the classics was considered the chief object of our short existence. Not long afterwards my father died. His loss was mourned by many, for he was greatly beloved; but in our own immediate circle the effect was crushing. How often I deplored his early removal, and with it the loss of opportunity to become better acquainted with his fine character. But our sorrows did not end here, for in a few years the two dear girls were taken. My mother was almost crushed with these bereavements. Although she was not left unprovided for, her resources were so much reduced as

to stimulate me to the effort of turning what talents I possessed to practical use in the work of my subsistence. I led a fragmentary life for some years, the only serious work being that of office routine and bookkeeping. I had time to study politics, and in my own style furiously denounced the Corn Laws and other defects in legislation. I became greatly interested in the declamations of Cobden and Bright, whose speeches I read with avidity. When the Hungarian revolution broke out in 1848 my enthusiasm on behalf of Kossuth knew no bounds. The names of Bem, Dembinski, Georgey, and Bathiany in a newspaper attracted me like a gold nugget. I rejoiced morning after morning to read of the total rout of the Russians by Bem, of a great victory by Dembinski, or a successful sortie from Komorn by General Klapka, and other achievements by the heroes, until there was treachery in the Hungarian camp, and the whole attempt collapsed. The escape of Kossuth and Bem, and the rough treatment accorded to General Haynau at the brewery of Barclay and Perkins in London, excited my warmest interest. I began at that time to discern that Lord Palmerston was a great statesman.

CHAPTER II.

REMOVAL TO LANCASHIRE—FIRST DAYS IN A. COTTON MILL.

AT about this time I received an important letter from Mr. John Thornton^x, a Manchester cotton lord. He was an intimate friend of my brother, who had for some years resided near Manchester. In this letter I was asked if I would like to turn my attention to cotton spinning and manufacturing. It also contained an invitation from the writer to come at an early date and spend a week with him, if I thought favourably of the project. Nothing could suit me better. I promptly accepted the invitation, and on a gloomy morning in February, 1850, I left the London and North-Western Station at Bristol, at seven a.m., and was *en route* for Cottonopolis, which I reached at dusk, after the train had been several times stopped through a heavy fall of snow. It was not until I had reached Stockport, and was crossing the viaduct, which affords a comprehensive view of that town, that I began to realize the great change in my life about to take place.

There were the mills beneath me, of which I had heard so much, and gloomy structures they appeared; and it must have been the time for "firing up" with most of them, as there was scarcely a chimney visible which did not appear to be doing heavy duty. There was no limit in those days to the production of smoke. A master was

^x John Thompson.

not then, as now, liable to a compulsory appearance before the mayor and corporation for making more than a restricted quantity. If the municipal dignitaries are engaged in cotton, he may escape with a small fine—otherwise he is made to consume his own smoke or be for ever pestered by inspectors.

I had been making all kinds of conjectures. The sight of Stockport was not cheering to a novice, and I almost began to wish myself in the West of England again. Then, I thought, what kind of a man am I going to see? Of course he would have a mill like those prison-looking buildings I had just passed. Of what earthly use could I be in such a place? I then began to picture in my mind Mr. Thornton's possible personal appearance—even his height and complexion. I had heard him well spoken of, and also that he dabbled in art and music. From the tone of his letter I concluded he was going to regard me as something more than a youth. So far, good. Had I not seen twenty summers? If I were not then a man, I ought to be one.

The train arrived at London Road, and in a few minutes later my cab stopped at a warehouse in Cannon Street, whither I had been directed to proceed. It was evening, and the street, which is a long, narrow one, was blocked with luries receiving bales of goods to be despatched by the night trains to their various destinations. The cabby was paid, and I found myself in a four-storied building, which seemed to contain sufficient calico to make shirts for the whole of London. I had to pass a window, through which customers and

visitors could be seen before their entrance to the office. I soon discerned Mr. Thornton, for the contrast between a cotton lord and his clerks was marked and unmistakable. At that moment he was engaged, for it was market day, in settling an account for healds and reeds (used in weaving), about which there was a slight dispute, and I had time for a mental criticism of my new friend. It is remarkable that the decision I then arrived at of his character and disposition is the same I have since held, after thirty years of intimate acquaintance. After a hasty welcome and inquiry for those of my relatives whom he knew, we left his warehouse to catch the Bolton train, which left the New Bailey Station, at Salford, in time to reach the mill before the stopping of the engines. In those days the hours of labour extended somewhat beyond the restricted time of more recent Factory Acts. I think the time for stopping then was seven o'clock, but am not sure. During the half hour's journey in the train I had further opportunities of carefully inspecting Mr. Thornton. There was a fellow-passenger, who entertained him with some curious revelations concerning a native of the village towards which we were hastening, and I watched the manner in which he received certain statements which were not complimentary to the absent person. On the whole I was favourably impressed.

The mill could be discerned from some distance, every window being lighted; the noise of the machinery also proclaimed its whereabouts long ere we reached it. I had already accomplished a long journey in addition to the shorter one we had

just made, and was tired. The entrance into the babel of noise occasioned by the machinery, with its strange appearance, and the odour of oil and cotton, had a bewildering effect. I should have been glad to retire there and then to a quiet cup of tea. Mr. Thornton offered me a glass of sherry, and when I had declined it with thanks, proceeded to "show me through the mill." I think he wanted to daunt me. I was indeed daunted, but concealed the fact. He might have waited until the next day, for I was very wearied. The inconsiderate man took me entirely over the old mill, for it was an old one. The original proprietor had made a fortune in it, and was still the owner of the property, but it ought to have been long previously demolished.

From the scutching room we passed to those of carding, roving, and slubbing, to the mule and throstle, visiting those containing warping, beaming and twisting, and the slashing operations. From thence we got into the thick of looms which were busy in making twills and fustians, to the warehouse, where the weavers were continually arriving with large lumps of cloth which they deposited on a long table. But he had not yet completed the tour of inspection. Not only had the engines and boilers and William Meadows,^x who had charge of them, to be seen and duly made known, but the drying and finishing rooms had to be visited, for Mr. Thornton not only spun warp and weft which he wove into all kinds of cloth but he manipulated the latter until what with perching and stiffening, ending, mending, dressing, and dyeing, the cotton fabric was made to resemble a piece of West of

England broadcloth or a Yorkshire tweed. I was glad when he gave the word to leave the mill, which was pronounced shortly afterwards; but there were still some six or seven oiled and dirty books, densely columned with figures containing daily results of cotton manipulations, which had to be glanced over before we got clean away.

The night was dark and cloudy. There were no lamps, for the country about Kearsley was in those days wild and dreary, with only here and there a house, though mills and collieries abounded. After a twenty minutes' walk on cinder roads and pavements constructed of small pebbles, we reached the home of the cotton spinner, a pretty residence, though hardly discernible, with a garden and a carriage drive to the house. I had now to become acquainted with his domiciliary life, and I did not care how soon I did so, for I was almost exhausted.

During the walk to the house speculation was rife as to the kind of lady I should find Mrs. Thornton to be. On entering the comfortable home, which instantly impressed me with the neatness and good taste of feminine rule, we were met at the threshold by the lady herself. I shall ever remember the sense of relief which came over me on the first exchange of salutation. The sincerity of the welcome was unmistakable, which, added to the anxiety expressed for my physical condition in a quiet though decided tone, assured me that my visit, made under such trying circumstances, would be an agreeable one. The conversation at the tea table was intelligent and pleasant. There were many subjects and persons of which we could converse

Mrs Thompson. nee Hanpison.

in common, and I was gratified to notice the high estimation Mr. Thornton held of my brother, whose musical genius and general culture were a theme on which he dwelt rapturously.

I discovered ere long my host was some years younger than his wife. Mrs. Thornton was a lady of mild manners, though evidently of a determined disposition; whilst her husband, on the contrary, had a nature inclined to be sanguine, and, I thought, somewhat frivolous. For instance, during the evening he said he should like to indulge himself with a pipe, and at the same moment cast an inquiring glance in her direction. Without raising her eyes from her crochet-work, she remarked, "You had better not, John." John, however, was intent on his desire for a fumous gratification (I did not smoke in those days), and produced from a cupboard a pipe almost as long as himself, at the same time offering me a duplicate. The wife was conscious of the presence of the "churchwardens," but her eyes were never raised from her work. Then came hesitation on the part of the would-be smoker, and a silence, during which the feminine eyes were not raised, but those of the husband met mine, as if appealing for sympathy and encouragement, of which, however, I had none then. At length John said, "Must I rebel?" to which the quiet, determined lady only replied with a steadfast look at him, and—the pipes returned to the cupboard. This little incident set me thinking, and determining, in my mind, the future management of so apparently a docile individual. The family consisted of two daughters, of the ages of ^xfour and six^{xx} years respectively, whom I did not see until the next morning at breakfast time.

x Mrs Rawlins.

and Mrs. Selby.

After arranging to accompany Mr. Thornton to the mill the next morning at 5-40, and it being now so late as 11-30, we retired for the night. He set an alarm clock in my bedroom, to waken me at 5-15. He also had placed on my dressing table a tray containing a loaf, butter, and a cup and saucer, it being necessary to have refreshment before leaving the house so early in the morning.

I had gone to sleep, but only for a few minutes, when bang went the alarm, keeping on its furious tinkle as if it would waken the dead. For a few seconds I thought that the night had passed very quickly, but in a few more the door of the room opened, and Mr. Thornton, in his night apparel, appeared, in a manner abject and profusely apologetic, and after examining the clock, told me he had set it wrong. I said to him, half asleep, "To make sure, don't you think you had better set it wrong again, because two wrongs make a right?" This absurdity made him laugh so vehemently that presently I heard a female voice saying, "John, you have wakened Mary." John thus left me to repose as well as I might. The alarm afterwards discharged its duty faithfully at the set time, and when I had taken some hot tea which he kindly brought me, we started in the dark, though the stars were shining as brightly as they can in Lancashire. For want of a knife to cut it, I omitted to take any solid food with the tea. This oversight was a serious one, and might have completely changed my future career.

After clearing the iron gates that protected his domain we were at once on the high road which leads to Manchester, and my ears were assailed by

an extraordinary clatter to which they had not before been accustomed. On inquiring of Mr. Thornton he informed me the sound was caused by the tramping of the operatives going to their work, who were all shod in wooden clogs, which, on the pebbled causeway, produced the strange effect. The appearance of the women every now and then, when there was sufficient light to discern them as they passed to and fro, was equally strange. They wore no bonnets or hats. The covering was simply a shawl, with which they first made sure of the protection of the head, the remaining portion of the body being left to the chance of the shawl being capacious or otherwise. Being still in the darkness (how I pined for the light!) I could discern nothing of the previous night's walk, though the route was exactly the same. Presently, as we approached more nearly, I heard what was now becoming a familiar sound of the looms, for we were a trifle late, and the mills start very punctually to time, as the loss of a couple of minutes multiplied by six hundred hands means the loss of twelve hundred minutes, or two days of ten hours for an individual.

On reaching the office, Mr. Thornton at once divested himself of his coat, replacing it with a short jacket, more or less covered with cotton, at the same time handing me one for a like operation. We then sallied into the mill to repeat the tour we had made on the previous night, but as my conductor thought fit to enlarge on the merits and history of various machines, and how they performed their functions, it seemed an interminable time ere we again reached the office. Before

arriving there, which was the most quiet place in the building except the boiler-house, I was introduced to William Meadows, the engineer, who was a native of South Wales. He had not been very long in the establishment. Mr. Thornton had a high opinion of his services, and described him as an able engineer and an estimable man. The engines were working smoothly and quietly as we entered his department, and he was calmly reading, by one of the gas jets, a book, which I observed was "The Hon. Baptist Noel on Church and State." He had one eye on the book, whilst the other followed the working of the parallel motion of the engine nearest to him. I had begun to feel very faint for want of my breakfast, and although much pleased with my new acquaintance, the great desire was to get away from all human beings at that moment. I had felt squeamish before I was half through the mill, and now I had difficulty in bearing up.

By the time I reached the office I was nearly done for. After a few minutes' rest I rallied, and asking the bookkeeper for writing materials, I penned a long letter to my mother, giving her a graphic account of my experience, from the time I left the maternal roof to the present miserable moment. I told her of my hospitable reception, and of the goodness of Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, but also that the mill had well nigh made an end of me in one hour; it was therefore impossible I could pass my life, or even a portion of it, in such a terrible place. When the letter was finished, I pictured the inevitable disappointment it would produce on my mother. For some years I had been her youngest child. The rest of her children

were settled in life, and she only required to see me fairly started in some promising path to be rendered happy. She had endured great grief in the loss of my father, and afterwards of the dear girls Esther and Bessie; and though her grandchildren were cropping up in all directions, and they diverted her thoughts from the late afflictions, yet her uppermost desire for my success remained unfulfilled.

The writing of the letter and the thoughts it produced must have revived me. I began to feel better—moreover, it was becoming daylight. Somehow, I brightened up under the influence of returning light, and added a postscript to my letter. How many times in my life have I thought and talked of that P.S., which was to the following effect: "Do not regard the views expressed as final. Wait until you again hear from me. I will write to-morrow, after repeating the terrible round, and if with the same experience you may expect me shortly." I said nothing to Mr. Thornton, who was busily occupied with one thing and another, and at 8-30 we left for his house to obtain breakfast. He changed the route on this occasion, and we passed a good-looking church of the Barry architecture, wherein he informed me was a fine organ. We also passed other places of worship, and a Mechanics' Institution. He informed me the working classes were very intelligent, more so than in the West of England; also that the village contained some young men who possessed genius, and who, if encouraged and stimulated by those who had been favoured with greater opportunities, might become shining lights,

enumerating a few of them, and giving their history. I took these remarks as a hint, but I was not in a philanthropic humour, and the young geniuses passed from my mind.

By the time we reached the house I was altogether a different person to that of an hour previously, but I was not able to take much breakfast. This circumstance was observed by the lady presiding. She had also observed the uncut loaf on my dressing table in the early morning, and correctly guessed the absence of a knife had been the cause, for which Mr. Thornton and myself were both censured—he for his neglect, and I for my “mock modesty” in not asking for a knife. This was the first time I had seen her playful. She was much concerned on hearing of my experience at the mill, assuring me it was entirely due to the want of food, and that in future she would herself see after the knife.

I now saw the two little daughters. They were neat specimens of humanity, and full of fun, and spent all the time in examining the new arrival. The governess was present, but being a friend as well as governess she did not appear to exercise much influence. On the whole, they carried out, as far as they were able under the circumstances, their mamma’s strict notions of the correct demeanour of young ladies in the presence of gentlemen.

The next morning, being fortified with bread and butter and hot tea, I again went through the mill ordeal with some variations, and came out unscathed. I then wrote another letter to the maternal, withdrawing the remarks previously

made, and informing her she would certainly not see me before the week had expired, as I now viewed matters in a different light. During the three years that I afterwards diligently went to the performance of my mill duties at half-past five in the morning, which was some hours before my landlady and her husband thought it necessary to rise—locking up the house after I was outside, and slipping the key under the door—I only once omitted the essential bread and butter. On the occasion of my so doing I wished to ascertain if the effect would be the same as on that first morning. I was not similarly affected, however, for I had become seasoned.

Before the week-end expired I had taken kindly to the new life, and this fact was so obvious to Mr. Thornton that he suggested my remaining where I was, of becoming a cotton lord, and sending home for my wardrobe. It was, however, necessary for me to find lodgings, and here arose a difficulty. There was not a place in Kearsley where rooms could be found, until, after much inquiry and hunting, an old pensioner and his wife were discovered, who graciously offered to take me, on the assurance that I was a quiet young man, and would not give much trouble—provided, also, I would not object to sit in the same room with the old couple. Of course I consented to this arrangement, under the circumstances, and in a day or two received my trunks from home, and found myself established in quarters of my own. I was sorry to sever the connection from the family with whom I had spent a memorable and happy week. Mr. Thornton arranged my

salary in a satisfactory manner, observing that in devoting my services to him he wished me to "learn all I could, and practice all I knew." His wife continued to be interested in my welfare, frequently calling at my lodgings to ascertain if my wants were attended to.

The old pensioner, Mr. Thomas Crewes, was a tall, white-haired man, with a majestic mien. He had served in the Peninsula under Frederick Duke of York, and was a regular veteran. His wife had followed him in his campaigns. She was an ungainly personage, and much bent in figure. If she could have been restored to the perpendicular, her husband told me she would have measured six feet in her stockings. This was the personage with whom in future I should spend my evenings. Mr. C was a quiet and taciturn man. He was a good and consistent Wesleyan, and read his Bible with regularity and devotion. Indeed, of an evening he was rarely to be seen without the large volume outspread before him. Many were the discussions we had upon doctrinal points. He had not the slightest respect for John Calvin, whom he considered a "mistaken man," nor had he any reverence for the clergy of any denomination except the Methodists, whose preachers he deemed the best in the world, and the only ones worth hearing.

Mrs. Crewes was altogether different to her husband, of whom I thought her unworthy. Her bent form was caused by rheumatism. She had an unpleasant sneer and a disagreeable voice, which she sometimes used vigorously, and I never observed her to ponder over the sacred volume as did her husband. Mrs. Crewes, however, had a

great capacity for the use of tobacco, and she smoked from the largest pipe she could procure. Had I only been a smoker in those days, but I was not ! Her favourite time for smoking was the same moment as that of my mid-day dinner. She considerably sat in the front of the fire-place, with her back to me, and the pipe being a long one and Mrs. C.'s figure semicircular, the bowl came directly under the chimney. The advantage I gained in the diminution of the fumes of her bad tobacco were more than counterbalanced by the hideous spectacle she presented during the operation of smoking.

The Crewes must have been fairly well off at that time. In addition to her husband's pension, which was a good one, and the sum I paid her for the use of the rooms and attendance, Mrs. Crewes derived some revenue through dabbling in leeches ! In the window of the sitting-room I occupied with the old couple there was an imposing sign, informing the inhabitants of the neighbourhood that Mrs. Crewes kept and applied leeches of approved quality. She was also in great request with the well-to-do of the inhabitants in the event of a death, when her services for the proper arrangement and disposal of the departed were deemed indispensable.

There were no children ; and it was no wonder, therefore, that with all these sources of income the Crewes should feel themselves justified in the indulgence of certain luxuries. These consisted on the part of the old woman, who had the lion's share (in addition to the unrestricted use of the "churchwarden"), in the proprietorship of three

cats. I believe they also must have served in the Duke of York's campaign. The cats were not kittens nor young cats, but very old cats, and they were the exclusive property of madame. There was also a dog, which was not a young one either, which was the property of the old man, of whom he was the companion, and in that fact lay the cause of the beast's misery, for he led an unhappy kind of life. Mrs. Crewes was a tyrant, as her meek man knew, as well as his dog. Although he was powerful enough to have pitched her through the window, notwithstanding her prodigious length, his only reply, when she dubbed him a "fool," and called him other as endearing names, was an extra swing to the rocking chair in which he sat, and which, to my discomfort, he was frequently swinging when not reading his Bible. He was too pious to swear at her; too amiable even to answer her back when thus attacked. This endurance on his part only increased her anger. It was at such times the poor dog suffered. She punished the old man by kicking his four-footed friend, and only then would the hitherto long-suffering husband arise in anger, and declare in a voice of thunder he would endure it no longer!

More than once have I seen her clear away after this expression of righteous indignation. There was no lobby to their house, which was a two-storied building, comprising four small rooms, consisting of my bedroom, their bedroom, the sitting-room and the kitchen. When either of the old people was tired of my company they could retire to the kitchen; when I was tired of theirs I found refuge in my bedroom, which, however, was

only just large enough to hold the four-poster on which I slept. On the opening of the front door the whole of the sitting-room was exposed to the view of passers-by. On one occasion, when returning for the evening, on opening the door, I came suddenly on a spectacle. It consisted of a group of three women, who were sitting in a semi-circle around the fire-place. Each woman had a long "churchwarden" protruding from her mouth, and was blowing away as if her life depended upon the speedy consumption of the weed. I need scarcely say that one of this precious trio was my landlady, who, on observing my astonishment at the weird scene which presented itself to my gaze, set up an immoderate laugh, in an unearthly pitch, in which she was afterwards joined by the two other women. "What a sight for Shakspeare!" I thought. Surely he would have given all he possessed to have witnessed it. The nearest approach I have ever seen to it was in his play of *Macbeth*.

CHAPTER III.

A MANUFACTURER'S DIFFICULTIES—ROUTINE OF THE MILL.

I GAVE close attention to millwork, and as Mr. Thornton wished it, contrived to be in the building every morning before six o'clock. At five minutes past six the main entrance which led to the different rooms was closed, and the workers who afterwards arrived could only obtain admittance by ascending a flight of steps facing the office window, to a room under the care of a grim-looking spectacled man, who acted the part of a cut-looker and also took cognizance of the late comers. It was when this door closed that I began the interminable round of the mill. I had learned, with some trouble, the names of the hands, male and female, with the exception of the weavers, who were indicated in the wages book by the numbers of their looms. When I found a frame or machine standing which should have been working, the fact was noted. After going through each room deliberately, and observing that each person was in his right place of action, I generally found myself with William Meadows in the engine-house. If there is poetry to be found anywhere in a cotton mill it is in the engine-house you will find it, if the room be well kept, as it was here. To a person of lively imagination the contemplation of a powerful beam engine working satisfactorily has a salutary effect. The idea of power, obedience,

and unobtrusive action are impressed on the mind. Provided it be kept in good order, its continued efforts in the service of its master and amenableness to his simple turn of a handle, inspires the beholder with respect and admiration. By treating the engine fairly, with thought and intelligence, you are sure of faithful service, but it requires constant care and watchfulness, for the want of which there is no limit to the havoc it might commit.

I do not forget, however, the occasional break in the monotonous life when some warbling weaver would launch out in a fine soprano voice, which could be heard high up above the clatter of the machinery. I have often stopped to listen to some well-known melody, which doubtless she had on the previous Sunday offered in praise to her Maker, in the church or chapel to which she resorted. It is a good sign when a weaver sings. It speaks to the fact that her yarn is good and her loom in good order. She cannot sing if her yarn be continually breaking. Apart from these considerations, I rejoiced in listening to a singing weaver.

The engineer was a pleasant man, and I soon found he possessed a soul even above his engines. A friendship was struck up which exists at the present moment. In a letter recently received from him he writes : " Were I ten years younger I would fly to you like a sea-gull, link my fortunes with yours, and build you a house " (supposing I was in the Bush). In the engine-house were two old-fashioned condensing engines, of some 150 horse power combined, which worked in a solemn

manner, that often astonished me, considering the forests of straps and wheels of which they were the motive power. They ought long previously to have made way for others of more modern construction. In an old place like this, if you once begin to pull out it is impossible to know how to stop; so in the absence of pulling the whole place down and of replacing everything it was best to leave things as they were.

I soon began to discover that the establishment of which I had become an active member was in a state bordering on dilapidation. I had access to every drawer, paper, and book in the place, and every overlooker had instructions to give me the fullest information on everything I wished to know. There was nothing therefore to hinder me from familiarizing myself with every fact in connexion with the mill's past history, its present condition, and future prospects. Moreover, William Meadows could enlighten me considerably on subjects I wished to investigate, not only with regard to the engines, boilers, and gearing which belonged to his department, but also in other matters. From these sources and the books kept in Manchester, which I audited monthly, together with an accidental glance at the last balance-sheet, I became painfully conscious of the state of Mr. Thornton's affairs. The mill was not prospering. This was a blow, and a source of grief which has never been removed. The question at the time was how an improvement could be effected. I had been brought to regard Mr. Thornton with feelings differing from those I had towards most other men. He reposed great confidence in me—indeed,

I thought too much so ; but this fact alone, apart from his trustful, generous nature, and my regard also for his wife and children, determined me that no additional efforts or sacrifices on my part should be too great to make for him. But, alas ! he had become so inextricably fastened in this forlorn, tumble-down place, that nothing short of a miracle in the shape of continuous and unheard-of good trade could relieve him. It was not a long while since he had taken the mill in a prosperous time (the best of all times to part with an old concern, and, of course, the worst in which to buy one) on a lease of fourteen years, two or three only of which had expired. It was taken at a maximum rental and the extensive machinery at a high valuation. It seems he somewhat precipitately detached himself from a thriving firm composed of his near relatives, but in which he did not act a very conspicuous part, and, in opposition to the counsel of his friends, grasped the bubble, which so soon collapsed, that he might reign supreme. I was much at his house, when he was wont to impart to me the circumstances of the terrible position in which he found himself. His wife also, on every available opportunity, poured into my ears the sad story of her husband's misfortune. I heartily sympathized with them, and being young, active, and hopeful, resolved to make their troubles my own.

My time was fully occupied with one thing and another. The daily wrapping of yarn and rovings to insure the thread being the correct count or thickness, the interminable journeys through the vast building, counting picks in the cloth, calcula-

ting costs and pricing finished fabrics, which were made up and labelled on the premises, previous to being packed in Hessian bags, and carted to Manchester, several times weekly, each piece being marked with a private character as a guide for the salesmen there—these were a part of my duties. Having a good eye for the raw material, and perception of its capabilities, I could discriminate for what purpose each bale was the best adapted. When the cotton was hoisted into the scutching room from the hold, weighed, checked, opened, and selected, mixings were made resembling hay ricks in size, shape, and construction. We had three mixings in use. One of them was composed of the strongest and longest fibre, without so much regard for colour, and was made for being spun into twist which afterwards was made into warps. Another mixing was formed of white soft cotton, and was made into weft. There was also a third mixing for a weft of an inferior quality, which was sold to country manufacturers.

One morning, Mr. Thornton came to me in a flushed and excited manner, and informed me he had discharged Reginald, the book-keeper, who, though he was clever, was deemed to be idle, and on too familiar a footing with the workpeople. Could I do his work in addition to my own, or must he engage another man? Now the clerical work in a large mill, where not only spinning and weaving but the finishing of goods is carried on, is no trifle. The wages book alone, which was of huge dimensions, was enough to make any young fellow shudder. It contained the condensation of calculations transferred to it from a variety of sources

in which at least forty other books, large and small, were concerned. It must have been my love for Mr. Thornton, coupled with the notion I had of my own powers, which prompted me to reply that I certainly could do the work, and that he must not engage any other man. He showed such satisfaction with my readiness to add Reginald's duties to my own, that I was already rewarded for the undertaking. W. Meadows thought I would not be able to carry out my well-intentioned purpose. He was mistaken. For a long period, by the time the big breakfast bell rang every morning at eight o'clock, I had completed the work in the terrible folio, which had occupied the departed Reginald nearly the whole day. I heard afterwards "John" was severely lectured by his wife for imposing this additional labour upon me.

Time went on, and Whitsuntide, which is the occasion of a great holiday in Lancashire, was approaching. An opportunity therefore offered of my making a visit to the West of England. My mother became so excited in the prospect of seeing me again, notwithstanding a week never passed without my keeping her informed of all my doings, that the doctor had to be called in, and I learned from a friend (not from my mother) that at one moment her case was serious.

On the evening before starting for home I was busy in preparing patterns of our various makes of cloth, with the intention of introducing them to some of the Bristol merchants, thus "killing two birds with one stone." There was a tinge of melancholy when I took leave of the family. It

was, however, only for ten days. My visit was a pleasant one. I was greeted as a young cotton lord, and also learned with satisfaction how I was regarded by Thornton, who, in a letter to my brother, which he showed me, expressed a high opinion of my "talents and activity," and also informed my brother I was of great service to him already. I read that letter with immense satisfaction. It made me happy, and encouraged me to renewed efforts on my return.

I was unsuccessful in my efforts to do business with the British merchants. They were supplied with the same class of goods made by a neighbouring maker of celebrity. I was powerless to induce them to make a change. Wherever I went I was greeted with the name of P, who sold goods made by B, and with which they all appeared to be quite satisfied, and so T's patterns scarcely received a glance. Subsequently, however, one of the firms called upon us and had large transactions. My visit taught me that when you succeed in getting your customer to call upon you, the battle is half won.

The West of England looked slow and quiet by contrast though clean and bright with the North. I was a hero for the time being, especially with two sweet little nieces—they were twins—and much fun was created through the mistakes I made arising from the strong resemblance they bore one to the other. They were the daughters of my sister of Locksbrook memory, and I had been associated with the whole of their little lives. We renewed our story-telling and other amusements, but I had to leave them, for the call of Lancashire was irresistible.

In a few months after my return, the terrible grind and daily wear and tear of my work began to tell upon me. I was doing too much, though I declined to recognize the fact. I had become like a machine—so much so, that on arriving at a certain spot on the morning journey to the mill, I regularly met, within a few inches of the same place, another machine like myself. He was the same gentleman who travelled with Thornton and myself when I made my first journey to Kearsley. We met here with clock-like regularity for three years, neither of us ever stopping, but content with throwing our respective heads on one side, in the true Lancashire mode of recognition. When it was winter I could not see him, but my quick ear recognised his footstep, being a distinct sound from those of the people encased in the inevitable clog. At a period of thirty-two years from that time, the same gentleman, when I reminded him, on the Manchester Exchange, of those meetings, when a chronometer might have been set for their regularity, startled me by saying, “I am there, now, every morning at the same place, at the same time, and have never ceased to be so since the years we used to meet there;” and he added, with a look of pain, “and I am a poorer man now than I was then.” What an experience! Hasten on with the Ship Canal!

But to return to the early days. I was losing flesh through incessant work. This change for the worse was noticed by Mr. Thornton, and I was sent to spend a few days with his family, who had gone to Fleetwood for their summer holiday. The days by the sea-side flew too quickly. I made a

* *Simeon Dyson.*

hurried visit to Furness in an excursion steamer, and was sensibly impressed with the beauty of the Abbey and its surroundings. On my return I was quite equal to the work again.

When I had lived six months with the Crewes, they became tired of me. I was not so quiet as they said they had been led to expect; but then the cats and the dog had not been taken into the calculation, and with these I carried on an incessant warfare. In leaving them I much improved my home existence, at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Crompton. Their household consisted of two little daughters, without even a kitten. I enjoyed the change, and remained with them all the time I spent at Kearsley. The pretty little cottage, in which I had a room all to myself, was in the township of Farnworth, and at a greater distance from my work, but the additional walking exercise did me no harm. I was nearer to Bolton, which was about two miles distant, and as I frequently found myself there on Saturday afternoons, and at the Parish Church on a Sunday, this was a slight advantage. The Rev. Mr. Slade was the vicar in those days. He was a good reader and an original preacher. He charmed me by his manner of reading the Collect (generally the same one) before the sermon.

Robert Crompton was a quiet young fellow, and was coachman to a gentleman in the neighbourhood who possessed great wealth and influence, and who was expected to represent the adjoining borough in Parliament at the next general election. He subsequently headed the poll. Mrs. Crompton had been a lady's maid. She was a homely, clever

little woman, and could cook well. I was in clover. On one occasion, when Mr. Thornton's cook was absent from some cause, he brought Mrs. Crompton a couple of partridges, and remained with me whilst she cooked them with great skill. They proved so great a success I began to have visions of future partridge suppers, for we demolished them on the spot. The cook must have speedily returned to her duties, for no more partridges came.

Now that I had ample room there was nothing to prevent the introduction of a piano to my lodging. The want of one for the previous six months had been a great privation, and I felt I was losing my music. Mr. Thornton advised me how best to proceed in obtaining one. I advertised in the *Manchester Guardian* for a second-hand Broadwood, and on receiving a score of replies from people who wanted to part with their worthless instruments, and others whose pianos were not of Broadwood's make, we devoted the following Saturday afternoon to calling on their owners. It was agreed between us that Mr. Thornton should do the talking during the interviews, whilst I tried the pianofortes. There was only one of them likely to suit me, and it belonged to a lady at Higher Broughton. The price she required for it was twelve pounds. I succeeded in true Manchester fashion in reducing it to eleven pounds ten shillings, for which sum I purchased it. I afterwards thought the proceeding a mean one, for although an old six octave square, it was a capital piano, of sweet tone, and kept well in tune. After using it for three years I parted with it for ten

pounds to a man who kept a second-hand musical instrument shop in Hulme.

At about this time I unexpectedly received a letter from Alfus Banham, a man whose friendship I greatly valued, informing me he was engaged scholastically at an easy distance from me, in the Moravian Academy at Fulneck, near Leeds. The letter intimated that he was coming on the Saturday to pay me a visit, which would extend to the following Monday morning. At this distance of time I like to think of the pleasure in prospect that letter afforded me. He was a man I loved with ardour. How well I remember one sentence in the letter, which ran, "Make no preparation for me but that of a pipe and tobacco. A fellow who has slept on the Carpathians can pass a night under a table, if necessary."

My little landlady, however, would take care he was well received, and on his arrival we were well nigh transfixed with the extensive preparations she had made for us. My friend had been educated in Germany, and was brimful of music, so I regarded the advent of the Broadwood, which was already placed in my neat apartment, with considerable satisfaction. He arrived, and what a meeting we had! I simply revelled in his presence. For a long time I had been amongst strangers, and now I had with me, and was going to have him all to myself for two whole days, the dearest fellow I had ever known. Banham was engaged to be married to a young lady whom I had known from youth up, and so he could talk with me of her by the hour. I was so much younger than he or the lady, there was no possibility of

any misconception arising from the enthusiastic manner I sounded her praises.

He was charmed with the piano, and told me I had swindled the lady from whom I had bought it. He played upon it for hours. The old masters, Bach, Haydn, and Mozart, were as familiar to him as the long clay pipe in the use of which he made my room opaque with smoke. Then how he improvised! If I gave him a theme of some three or four bars he would work it out, enlarge upon, and elaborate it, reproducing it again and again in such a variety of shapes, until it seemed impossible for him to proceed further, and he would break down in a roar of laughter. Oh, how I enjoyed it! Of course, I introduced him to Mr. Thornton and the family, and Mr. T. joined us in our little *tête-à-tête*. How quickly the time flew, and how much I had to tell him of my new life. He listened to all I had to say with great earnestness, and gave me the best counsel one friend could impart to another.

His visit came to an end, like everything else that is pleasant, but never the remembrance of it whilst I live. Two days afterwards I received the following letter from him :—

“ Fulneck, Monday, April 28th, 1851.

My dear Steinhauer,—Having just written a few lines to Fanny (my sister), I hasten to write and inform you of my safe arrival, as also to assure you of the pleasure I feel in the retrospect of my visit to Farnworth. How could it be otherwise? I cannot regard you otherwise than a dear relative, for I am sure we are equally interested in each other's welfare, and a mutual confidence subsists between us which sincere affection alone could

engender and reciprocal appreciation cement. I am heartily glad that you seek contentment and patience, amid the no doubt trying ~~and~~ monotonous duties of your present position, from above, in which case there can be no doubt that God, in His gracious and all-wise providence, will, when the proper time shall arrive, promote your progress onward to a new and to a happier sphere of action.—Ever your affectionate friend,

“A. B.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXHIBITION OF 1851—ANTI-CORN LAW LEADERS—KOSSUTH.

ONE evening when Mr. Thornton came to the mill from Manchester, as was his custom, he was accompanied by a young gentleman, to whom I was introduced. He had not been mentioned to me before, and beyond the fact that he wore long hair, and had a penetrating glance, he did not particularly attract my notice. He was younger than Mr. Thornton, with whom, I soon detected, he was on familiar terms, as he addressed the latter as "John." Mr. T. went into the mill to inquire as to the progress of some cloth orders, and I was left alone with the stranger, who, to my surprise, asked me many questions respecting the internal working of the mill, such as related to the horse power, counts of yarn, and number of hands employed. He was also interested in our circulating library and the number of its volumes. To all of his inquiries I gave him ready replies, and by the time Mr. Thornton returned he was in possession, apparently, of all he wished to know, and the memorandum book in which all had been jotted down was returned to his pocket. They then talked of old times, and seemed very happy together, and I was invited to join them at tea that evening. On the journey to the house I was again introduced to the clever stranger, who was Mr. Hepworth Dixon. I had read two of his

books, *The Prisons of England* and *Life of William Penn*, and my interest in him was therefore aroused. This was the year of the Great Exhibition, and Mr. Dixon had been appointed a Commissioner by the Prince Consort, to take the responsibility of the proper representation of the cotton industry at the forthcoming national display. As far as I can remember the result was very satisfactory. Mr. Dixon had begun his career in Manchester, of which he had an intimate knowledge, and also of many of the leading citizens. He was therefore, being a man of great activity and vigour, just the one to carry out efficiently so important an undertaking. Soon after this visit there appeared in the columns of the *Daily News* a description, though somewhat meagre, of the mill, under the heading of "Visits to Lancashire Mills." Mr. Thornton said I must see the Exhibition, and for that purpose released me for a week or two; and I found myself soon afterwards in London, watching, to my intense amusement, Kearsley weavers in the Metropolis! They were weaving in that part of the building set apart for machinery in motion.

We never had reason to think we derived any advantage in inviting the foreigner over to witness the manner we made cloth. No doubt his eyes were opened and his imagination aroused, for in later times our former customers from foreign markets met us with the statement, "We make our own cloth now!"

On the approach of winter, and during its continuance, it was the custom of many millowners to give entertainments to their workpeople. Mr.

Thornton, who was keen on social improvement, must not be behind his neighbours. It was decided our people should be given a treat, but it was to be called a "soiree," which was duly announced by the circulation of little handbills. But Mr. Thornton was not the man simply to indulge his people in the gratification of their animal propensities. His entertainment must include, in addition to beef and plum pudding, "the feast of reason and the flow of soul." To my horror, I observed it announced, amongst other attractions, that the workpeople would be addressed by Mr. Thornton and other gentlemen, amongst whom my own name was mentioned. I did not like the prospect, but as the community was a speech-loving one, I thought it my duty to add, if possible, to the success of the occasion. I wrote on paper what I thought might be an appropriate speech, and tore it up. I tried another, with the same result, then another, and tore it up again as unsuitable. I spent hours in the effort to produce something satisfactory, but was unsuccessful.

Mr. Thornton, anxious to secure all the available talent possible for the occasion, asked me to invite an old friend of mine from Bristol, to be present. Mr. G. Goldney, whom I had known from boyhood, and who had recently come to reside in Manchester, was a man of considerable attainments, and had travelled much on the Continent, and, I think, in America. He cheerfully accepted the invitation, and made the speech of the evening. It was not long, but pithy and consecutive. In it he rapidly described the cultivation of the cotton plant, from the time the seed was sown, and its subsequent

ginning, whipping, moteing, and packing experiences, to the moment it entered our mill. He wisely omitted any mention of the raw material from that moment (for he knew nothing whatever of cotton manufacturing, although he had for years passed the Bristol Mill daily, on his way to his glass works in the city), but he again took it up when it had become a cast-off rag, following it to the paper mill, and describing graphically the process there, until its arrival at the printing office of the editor, to be the medium of instruction to the reading millions, after it had ceased to clothe them. Mr. Goldney threw a halo of usefulness and dignity around cotton, which delighted every person present, and did not absorb an undue proportion of the time. Mr. Thornton was terribly long in his address; so was the old goggle-eyed "cutlooker," who read from a paper he had prepared with evident care, in which he lectured Mr. Thornton for his frequent inability to manage his temper. The ungracious old fellow received his reply some time after. He had not taken into account that we all have our foibles, and that he was no exception to the rule. But of this he was made conscious before his master sat down a second time.

I fondly hoped, after all the eloquence of the evening, I should be overlooked, but it was not so to be. There were shouts from all parts of the room for Mr. G., and I was considerably conducted by two gentlemen to the front of the elevated platform. It was fortunate I had put some ideas into shape on the previous evening, for I was now not entirely without a little matter on which to say something, though

in thinking it over afterwards it appeared to me infinitesimal. I could add little that would be either amusing or instructive, after the distinguished gentlemen (including the old cut-looker) who had preceded me, but I would, in conclusion, make one remark, of which no previous speaker had hinted, with a wish that had not hitherto been expressed. It was this, "that we should all live to meet again under similiar circumstances." The effect of this was magical, and during the prolonged applause which followed I retired. Only twice since, in my life, have I brought myself to address an audience.

I mentioned in a former page the turn of my political instincts, and that I had warmly sympathized with the efforts of the Anti-Corn-Law League. As all the world knows, the leading men of this body were Cobden, Bright, Milner Gibson, and George Wilson, with whose speeches I had been greatly attracted, especially those of Bright. I had never seen these heroes, but as I was now living near the seat of war I was soon to have the opportunity. Mr. Thornton invited me to accompany him to a political soiree, to be held in a large room of the Albion Hotel, at which they would all appear and take an active part in the proceedings. Before the commencement of Parliament, this phalanx of four were annually in the habit of addressing enormous masses of constituents at the old Free Trade Hall, a building which would accommodate eight to ten thousand persons. On these occasions, Mr. George Wilson occupied the chair, in the functions of which he was a genius! He was a man with a powerful countenance, having a massive forehead, penetrating eyes, and fine

features, upon which a smile rarely played, although the whole visage seemed to be illuminated with a benevolent design. I have seen him in the large room in Peter Street, at the commencement of a meeting, when there was some unaccountable noise of voices and general commotion at the other extreme end of the room, rise, and whilst his eagle eye was turned to the noisy quarter, he has held up his hand in a manner so expressive and remarkable, that the hundreds of turbulent spirits were hushed as if by magic, and he has then begun the opening proceedings.

On the occasion of the meeting at the Albion no such display of power was necessary. The room would not accommodate more than a few hundred persons, so the audience was select. As T. and I sat together and watched the ascent of the orators, one by one, to the platform, I amused and astonished him by pointing out the various personages by name, although I had never before seen any of them. I afterwards enlightened him that I was indebted to *Punch* for this familiarity with their personnel. The speeches had all been delivered, and were directed to the late Papal Aggression by the introduction of the Roman hierarchy, concerning which it had been a matter of uncertainty how the event would be regarded, and hitherto the leaders had made no sign; and it appeared to me a murmur of disappointment ran through a portion of the room at the course matters had taken, Mr. Gibson being the first to break the ice by saying, "We had better leave the Roman hierarchy alone." After this Lord John Russell's celebrated letter to the Bishop of Durham was

mercilessly criticised. Mr. Bright had peeled and eaten an apple, the rind of which he let fall on the floor (how we notice and remember little things!), and T. and I had regaled ourselves with very dry sandwiches and a glass of poor sherry, and we then left the building. For many years after this I was furnished with a platform ticket, and attended the annual meetings in the Free Trade Hall. I was also present at the meeting, and sat within a few feet of him, when Kossuth made a speech in English lasting two hours. At the end of this extraordinary address Dr. Vaughan rose, and grasping the Magyar by the hand, vehemently said, "God bless you, sir!" and something more, which I have forgotten. I saw Kossuth the same day taken down Market Street in an open carriage drawn by enthusiastic Hungarian sympathisers.

When Mr. Thornton and I left the Albion it was past eleven o'clock. He told me there was a train (the last, which went by the name of the "tipplers" train) to Kearsley at 11-15. It was generally late, and he hoped it would be so, for my sake, on this occasion. He was going to pass the night at his mother's house. I had only twelve minutes to make the journey to the New Bailey Station, where I arrived after rapid walking, to find the train had left. It was now 11-30. I was some eight or ten miles away from my lodging, in a strange city, on a dark night, and not improved by a drizzling rain peculiar to Manchester. There were no cabs. Had there been any it would have been all the same, for I had no money in my pocket; so being in the proper direction for Bolton, I resolved to put my locomotive organs to the test.

I had been sitting the greater part of the evening, and felt quite equal to the occasion, though a little provoked, as Mr. Brooke^x, of Farnworth (my landlord's master), had offered to take Mr. Thornton and myself home in his carriage. It was a dreary walk, and after passing Pendleton and approaching Clifton it became still more dreary. The road though wide, was muddy. I kept in the centre of it to avoid ditches and possible garotters. I arrived, however, without mishap, and at two o'clock a.m. let myself into my lodgings, damp and tired, and hastened to bed. I slept until 5-30, and was at my post at the mill as usual, after meeting my never-failing 'time-keeping' friend at the same unerring place, and knowing him by his unclogged footstep, for it was still dark as pitch. When Mr. Thornton appeared at 8 a.m. I had finished the work of the big folio. He was thus encouraged to accord future indulgences, in which he was never backward.

x Thomas Barnes.

CHAPTER V.

THE QUEEN'S VISIT—MUSIC IN MANCHESTER—A FACTORY FIRE.

THE visit of the Queen to Manchester was a stirring event. It took place on October 7th, 1851. I suppose in no county in England is loyalty more genuine and intense than it is in Lancashire. Of course, we had a universal holiday, and the workpeople, by tens of thousands, in their best attire, radiated towards Manchester.

At the nearest railway station of the township where I lived, which bears the name of Moses Gate (I never was able to trace any particular connection between the place and the great law-giver) the trains from Bolton and the North stopped longer than at other stations, for the purpose of collecting passenger tickets. This circumstance, and it being necessary to run additional trains to meet the increased traffic on this particular occasion, made the morning a very busy one at Moses Gate Station. I watched train after train depart with dismay. There was not standing room in any of them for myself and other passengers, who were left on the platform. I began to fear I should be deprived of my anticipated view of royalty, when a train arrived from Bolton, some of the carriages having seats upon the roof. As there was no accommodation inside I found myself in almost no time in company with other

similar enthusiasts, riding towards Manchester on the roof of a train, with my legs dangling, for there was no step for their support. There was an iron rail, however, on which to lay hold with the hand. I did not altogether like the situation, notwithstanding its novelty. We were not far from the engine, and the steam and coke cinders blew into my face and eyes most abominably. Worse than all, it began to rain. I had an umbrella, which, without thought, I hoisted for protection from the rain. In another half minute it was smashed through coming into contact with the arch of a bridge under which we were passing, between Moses Gate and Halshaw Moor. Fortunately I had a sufficiently effective hold with one hand upon the rail to retain my seat; but it was a marvel I was not killed. On passing this spot, in later years, as Paterfamilias with his tribe bound for the sea-shore, I have thought of the umbrella and the narrow escape of its owner. The journey was an expensive one through the destruction of the umbrella, which the Queen never made good, nor the railway company. It only now occurs to me I might have obtained damages from the latter! On the arrival of the train at Clifton, the stationmaster was so shocked to see where we were perched, that by a squeezing process inside accommodation was provided for us; but we were somewhat weather-beaten when we reached our destination.

I saw the Queen and Prince Albert, with the young Prince or Princess who accompanied them, but I was not a witness of the singing of some 20,000 children at Peel Park, in presence of Her

Majesty, and which caused her to shed tears, as it undoubtedly would me had I been present.

There was not much in Kearsley to divert the mind. I felt the want of music dreadfully, and Saturday evenings frequently found me in Manchester, at the Mechanics' Institution in Cooper Street, where concerts of an unpretentious kind were given by an energetic little man whose name was Weston. I never heard him perform on any instrument; he simply got up the concerts and conducted them himself. There was no orchestra, the instruments being the organ belonging to the building, a square pianoforte, and an occasional violin. The conductor greatly resembled Jullien in face and figure, and his manner generally strikingly resembled that of the great *maestro*. Mr. Henry Walker, a modest young fellow, a lad in those days, was the accompanist on all occasions, doing duty in a manner very satisfactory to the audiences, who were not niggardly in the bestowal of applause. The vocalists were few, and did not vary much. There was a powerful soprano, Mrs. Sunderland,^x *tour de force*, and a Mrs. Winterbottom, who possessed a rich contralto voice. She once melted me in her interpretation of "He was despised," from the *Messiah*, finishing the song with an artistic shake, and making it one of the most perfect things I ever heard. Two young sisters named Sudlow also sang at those concerts. One of the male vocalists, Mr. George Perrin, a tenor, and Signor Delavanti, an amusing buffo, frequently made their appearance. The latter, who I afterwards discovered was an Irishman

^x Sang "I Know that my Redeemer liveth"
with great effect.

named Delaney, sang with great humour; his performances were an attractive feature at the concerts. There were other vocalists whom I have forgotten. Many a pretty ballad and part-song were given on those occasions, and often with great skill and pathos.

These were the only concerts at that time given in Manchester with any regularity which were available for the general public, the Concert Hall being like a sealed book to the mass. Mr. Charles Halle had not long arrived in Manchester. The first time I heard a performance of Mr. Halle was in the beginning of 1853, at a miscellaneous concert at the Free Trade Hall, on which occasion he gave his services. The concert was given on behalf of a charitable object. At this concert he performed only two pieces, a fantasia of Liszt's from *Le Prophete*, and No. 1 of the *Lieder Ohne Worte*. The other artists were the inevitable Signor Delavanti and Mr. George Perrin, who on that occasion sang in English, Rossini's duet, *Un Segreto*, in a tame manner, I thought, after the rendering of old Lablache and his nephew Nicholas, whom I had previously heard sing it at a morning concert in Bath.

A man will not be long in a mill without a stirring incident of some kind or another, generally in the form of an accident. Sometimes the women have fits; which are painful to witness. The men also suffer from the same cause. At another time an unfortunate individual gets caught by a band or strap, and if he be not sufficiently heavy to cause the strap to become disengaged from the pulley he is whirled up to the ceiling in no time,

and loses a limb or his life as the case may be. I have heard of a girl being scalped as neatly as if operated upon by a Mohican. In this instance her tresses, which were somewhat lengthy, accidentally became mixed up with the cotton that was being passed through the "scutchers" at which she was engaged, and she was in almost a moment left in the unfortunate predicament described. Fortunately in my time, or any other that I heard of, we escaped any mishap of this kind. But we were not left without a "stirring incident" either. One morning, when I was completing my attentions to the cumbrous wages book I thought I heard, above the clatter of machinery, the sound of "Fire!" from a female voice. It was only a few moments before the sound was repeated again and again most unmistakably. In a shorter time than I take to write it the sounds had accumulated into such a hideous chorus as to make my blood run cold. I had often heard women scream and make a noise about nothing, but now men's voices were mixed up with those of the women, and in addition to the shoutings of "Fire!" which came nearer and louder, there was a terrific sound, occasioned by the tramping of many clogs, which increased every moment and resembled thunder. The next moment—for everything was momentary—the door at the top of the stairs fronting the office window burst open. Then, what a sight for a man who for the previous two hours had been anxiously absorbed in figures and calculations, and was now contemplating a quiet breakfast! for I always took my breakfast in the office. Our workpeople might have been all

actors, and each individual a Mrs. Siddons, for the unutterably horrid effect they produced on my mind.

The women were, of course, the first to escape through this doorway. But why did they not walk out quietly, as they might have done, with calmness and dignity, each one enveloped in a protecting shawl? There was really no need for them to make such a helter-skelter exit from the place. With their rolling eyes, hair loose and flying in all directions, and their arms unnecessarily used in the apparent act of dragging each other from the place of destruction, they seemed to descend the steps in a seething mass. After considerable effort I was able to pass this mass of yelling humanity, at the same time crying "Shame!" upon them for the noise they were making, to which they took no heed. I found myself, in spite of smoke, which was rapidly coming from the place of mischief, in presence of the cause of the hubbub. My whole system had received such a shock from the experience of the last few minutes that a reaction took place, and I beheld with wonderful calmness, all things considered, the spectacle that greeted me on entering the scutching room. There was conflagration and no mistake. The scutcher in the centre of the room was a mass of fire, burning with irresistible fury. The flames savagely looked as if they had got where and what they wanted with such a grip that nothing but total extinction would satisfy their devouring greed. By this time the engines had been stopped, and the ubiquitous engineer was on the spot. William Meadows was a man

who knew no fear. At one moment seeming quite at home surrounded by sparks, in the next he shook them off, and mounting a ladder with the agility of a cat, proceeded to inspect various openings in the extensive wall through which the shafting was received from the adjoining card-room for driving purposes. He rightly divined that in a minute or two the room would have to be left to the devouring element, and hastened to examine all the vulnerable points, to which he must turn all his energies and attention, but it would be on the other side of the wall, for now the devoted room was almost full of flames.

The two rooms were connected by an iron-proof gangway, the metal doors of which being now both closed there was no danger from that quarter. But the danger of the fire protruding through the shafting openings in the wall was imminent. If only a few sparks fell through into the cardroom the whole place must go. There were some four or five of these openings at wide distances from each other and at a considerable height from the floor. Each opening now showed a furnace on the other side. To fill them up was vital, but it seemed an impossible achievement. How to fill them up was quickly decided on by the engineer's ready wit. It must be done with clay, to procure which buckets were soon let down through a window to the side of the cold water lodge, where, fortunately, there was an abundance of the article used in puddling the sides of the bank. As the buckets were filled they were re-hoisted through the window and passed on to Meadows, who, on the top of a ladder, received the

welcome ductile substance and conveyed it to the jaws of the fiery cavern, thus resisting the progress of the fire inwards. But "Clay, clay, more clay!" is wanted. The orifices are so large a hundredweight of it is nowhere. Then comes a shout, "The fire is coming through the opening on the left! We shall never be able to keep it back at all points." Another ladder arrives, and with it more clay from another source. How manfully they fight the monster, who peers first through one opening and then another, to be met with a successful slap in the face by a bucketful of the ever-welcome though still insufficient clay. This was a case of puddling under difficulties. The wall was now becoming dangerously hot; the fire engines, however, belonging to those of our neighbours who possessed them, were on the spot, but through neglect of previous practice on the part of some of the manipulators, they did not afford the speedy relief that was hoped for. There was an opening larger than the others requiring immediate and special attention. Let this be effectively closed, and the hose be brought to play on the large area of heated wall and we may hope for a successful issue. At length the hose was in full play, and then followed a stand-up fight between fire and water on the one side and a human being on the other, the fire facing him as his mortal and avowed enemy, with whom he was battling unflinchingly, whilst the water was pouring upon him from behind, though with friendly intent yet with most alarming prospects. At one time it appeared a question of cooking, either of roasting or boiling, as the water was

thrown back from the hot wall which it cooled, but afterwards frequently fell over the devoted man, who performed his offerings of clay until the fire was appeased.

The main portion of the mill was saved. The blowing-room, with all above and below, including cotton, was more or less destroyed. There was a fine display of activity on that occasion by a gentleman, Mr. Rideout, who accompanied his own fire engine to the spot, which was some miles distant from his extensive paper works, and worked with and directed the men in a manner reminding one of the exploits of a distinguished nobleman in London, who has a praiseworthy mania for extinguishing fire. As for William Meadows, had I been the Queen I should have made him a baronet on the spot.

This disaster proved a great loss to Mr. Thornton. The amount to which the property was insured was ample to cover everything had everything been destroyed. In this instance the stock of cotton was larger than usual and had not been provided for by an additional risk. The amount for which he was covered fell short of some £1,500 of the value of the destroyed property. It was many weeks before active operations recommenced, as a portion of the mill had to be rebuilt.

Whatever honour the Queen might, hypothetically, have been disposed to confer upon the man who saved the mill, my worthy employer's wife was not so inclined. It appears that during the conflagration she was watching the distant smoke and flames from her residence, with the most ardent hope that the whole place would be anni-

hilated. Such a result would have been hailed by her with the greatest satisfaction, as it would have been followed by her release from the village of Kearsley (which she regarded as a place of banishment), and a return to her native city of Manchester, where her relatives chiefly resided. I believe she reproached William Meadows more than once for having "rivetted the chain that was so nearly severed."

In adjusting with the insurance offices, the salvage, which was considerable, was assessed at a low figure, and remained Mr. Thornton's property. As it consisted chiefly of damaged cotton (by fire and water), and we could not work it up, and it was desirable it should be disposed of in the most advantageous manner, it was decided to advertise in a Bolton paper that the cotton more or less burned at the fire would be sold privately, on a certain day, and I was entrusted with the matter. After receiving instructions not to sell it for less than a fixed sum, which was more than the value set upon it by the office, I was left to my own devices, and found myself presently an important personage amongst waste-dealers, who came in numbers sufficient to inspire me with the conviction that burned cotton was greatly in favour. I adopted a simple way of managing the visitors, by receiving one at a time into the office. The amounts offered for the whole quantity, *en bloc*, varied considerably, one man estimating that it contained much more water than did another. Whether the profit intended to be obtained by the bulk of the bidders was very large indeed, or the purchaser incurred a heavy loss in the transaction,

I don't know; but the successful man, who. was the highest bidder, gave me more than double the sum I was offered by many of the others. Judging from the difficulty of keeping down the stock of goods in Manchester, I concluded that the selling of the raw material, even when half consumed, was a more pleasant occupation than the selling of cloth.

Mr. Thornton was so satisfied with the manner I had disposed of the burned cotton and the much higher figure I had obtained for it than he contemplated, that he urged me to go to Manchester, and personally manage the warehouse there. I cheerfully agreed to his proposal, and whilst mentally blessing the burned cotton which had led to it, regretted that poor Mrs. Thornton had still to remain at Kearsley, and that in future I should see little of her and the children. I had now been three years at the mill, where I had made close application, and was an adept in many things. I had a keen eye for the value and quality of cloth, and was also familiar with the cash book, journal, and ledger, which had been brought to me monthly for examination. These and a few other qualifications were regarded as amongst the good reasons for my being transplanted to Manchester at the commencement of 1853.

CHAPTER VI.

MANAGING A MANCHESTER WAREHOUSE.

I PARTED reluctantly from my worthy little landlady and her husband, with whom I had lived happily and comfortably for nearly three years. I remember how she told me, with tears in her eyes, the place would no longer be a home to them after I was gone. How friendly we had been! Had I not read books to them on winter evenings until Robert would fall asleep (except when *Uncle Tom's Cabin* happened to be the volume, the effect of which was to keep him awake half the following night through sheer sadness)? Had I not been with them at the time when that terrible accident occurred to Robert and his master, when both were thrown from the carriage, the latter losing a limb in consequence, and each of their lives was endangered? Had not my old square Broadwood (the door being always open so that they could enter my room with freedom) been as much a source of pleasure to them as to myself? They were as familiar with my songs, my Sunday music, and Beethoven's *Sonata Pathetique*, as I was. And now they would hear no more music, and what was more sad, would probably see no more of me. Even the two children set up a howl. Altogether it was too much for me. Vowing I would never come over without calling upon them,

I got away. I kept my promise, but the next time I saw them, they were living by the Windsor Bridge, at Pendleton, where Robert had obtained a coachman's situation with a Mr. Bradshaw. I afterwards was told he had done this hoping I would again take up my quarters with him and his wife.

There were others of whom I took leave, but as I should probably meet many of them again in Manchester the parting was not so affecting. Amongst the latter was Mr. Edward Phelps, who was perhaps my most congenial friend whilst at K. He was some years my senior, and was the manager of a large chemical works in the neighbourhood. He showed literary taste, was musical, performing on the flute and the inevitable cornet. He played a good game of chess, and was a buyer of old engravings, of which he had an interesting collection, quite unique he thought: it certainly contained many fine impressions of Wille, William Woollet, and Raphael Morghan. It was an intellectual recreation to spend an evening with him, and as I could delight him through being the happy possessor of some fine examples of water-colour art, we were frequently at each other's "diggings." I first met him at a debating society, at the Mechanics' Institution, whither I resorted on an evening, to read the daily papers only, but where he was a shining light as he was also of kindred institutions in Manchester. He was a fierce Liberal in politics, and was somewhat latitudinarian in his religious views. Apart from these drawbacks, and that he had rather a patronising manner, he was a companionable man. I frequently

met him afterwards in Manchester, where he too came to reside, but it is many years since I saw him.

William Meadows parted from me with a cheerful countenance, saying I should make my mark in Manchester. For some time we had in the office, under my immediate control, a little fellow belonging to the village, who had worked with such diligence as to become almost master of the situation. His writing so resembled my own, I was many times puzzled when his documents came under my attention. Some dozen years afterwards, when occupying an important position in one of the largest of the neighbouring mills, he informed me he owed that position to me. "You made a man of me, sir, when you told me to chuck the 'ready reckoner' into the fire, and trust to my mental powers." William Crawshaw was, like many others, so awed with the formidable wages book that he made use of extraneous aid to help him through. I was sorry to leave him also, it being pleasant to contemplate a successful career which one-self has, in a measure, helped to bring about.

There was also a young married couple who occupied the lodge of the mill of which they had the charge, towards whom I felt a warm attachment, and of whom I took a lingering leave. They, too, hailed from Wales, and their strong Celtic accent had a pleasing effect on my ear. They had every morning converted the office into a breakfast room for me, and I vividly recall the pleasurable sensations produced by the transformation. They were near relatives of W. Meadows.

I soon fell into the Manchester routine. The most disagreeable of my duties was that of collecting accounts. This, however, at most, was only carried on during a portion of two days in the week, chiefly on the Friday, and occasionally on the Tuesday. My great objection to this necessary performance was the loss of time it occasioned when every moment was valuable. It affected me in this way: I had frequently to collect, on a certain Friday morning, a large sum, say £1,200, from some fourteen or sixteen houses, whose combined accounts, due on that day, equalled that amount. It was ever present to my mind that at least this sum, minus that required for wages and perhaps some oil, tallow, coal, leather, &c., must be remitted in the afternoon to Liverpool, for cotton. Having arranged the order of my calls at the various offices where I am to receive money, I find on my arrival at the first of them a string of personages on the same errand as myself. The office may probably be on a second floor, and from it, beginning at the lucky individual whose privilege it is to be "next" in the order of securing the "needful," following a long passage containing a double row of collectors, and then down the two flights of stairs, lined on either side with these gentlemen, to within a yard or two of the main entrance of the establishment, there are probably some hundred and fifty persons waiting for cash. The whole of them must be satisfied ere my turn comes! Time is valuable. What must be done? A rapid mental calculation has to be made. How long will it take the cashier to pay off all these fellows, in

addition to those who come after the last man has been settled? If the cashier be an active one, the whole may be disposed of in, say, a couple of hours. Some, however, take a much longer time than others. No man knows this fact better than a collector. The time has to be utilised in reconnoitering the other houses, which, perhaps, are at a considerable distance off, and where the collectors are in less strength. Probably this surmise turns out to be a correct one, there being a lull in numbers in the new quarter. After receiving the cheques, yet another calculation for the economy of time, as the houses do not pay after one o'clock. Very likely the most formidable obstruction of the morning proves to be the one where the first call was made.

I always sympathized with collectors. To be a successful one he requires to be patient, keen, cool, and active; and his position being one of great responsibility, having large sums of money frequently under his control, his integrity must be unassailable. Many a time have I watched an exhausted individual take with hopeless resignation his place, some seventy or eighty down the list, to wait his "turn." I have hoped he only had that one account to collect. If otherwise, unless his principal rejoices in a good balance at his banker's, he will be in poor show when the fatal hour of one arrives. Sometimes, in spite of all one's calculations and the greatest exertions, the clock hand pointed to that figure on the dial which was the signal to cease payments, before the whole of the accounts were collected. We took care to hook the biggest fish earliest in the morning, so

that if any were uncaught within the prescribed limit of time they should, at any rate, be the least important. Sometimes a good-natured cashier would, if properly approached, give one a cheque, after hours, attended perhaps with a growl for not having come at the right time!

Mr. Thornton had a good connection amongst the Manchester merchants. There was a fine array of names in the ledger. Nearly all the most important houses, home and shipping, were amongst his customers. With such magnificent surroundings, why should he not make a fortune? The reply to this interrogatory gradually unfolded itself to my mind. I was made conscious, in time, of the fact that our goods were not manufactured with that regularity of quality which characterised those of the successful makers. Hitherto I had been accustomed to see only such fabrics as were manufactured at K.; and, comparing these one with another I could easily decide on their respective values. It was quite another thing to compare them, side by side, with cloths of other makers. I have more than once been put to the blush when a brusque buyer, having refused to pass an invoice—in consequence of which determination I was disappointed in receiving cash—has invited me downstairs to inspect the last delivery, and compare it with a former one. “Look on this picture,” pointing to the article as it should be; “and now on this,” directing my attention to the piece which should have been of a similar quality, but which was much inferior. “Do you consider this a fair fulfilment of my order?” “Certainly not,” is my reply; “but if

you will kindly pass the invoice I will send you another piece in exchange for the faulty one." "But," says he, "they are all alike." "Surely not?" was my inquiring answer. A score out of fifty pieces are brought and set out on a counter for my delectation. The first we examine is worse than the one we have been inspecting; so is the second, and the third; so are they all! My agony of mind is great, and I am compelled to accidentally glance my eye upon something or another in the place which has apparently attracted my attention, to have a moment for reflecting how to escape from the present dilemma.

I want immediate cash for wages, and on no consideration do I want to see the goods returned to the warehouse. "How can I satisfy you?" "You cannot satisfy me." "How can I meet you?" "By allowing me a penny a yard on the whole delivery." This answer is staggering, and unless modified I can see distressing results. It was not, however, delivered as his ultimatum; and on my proposing to him the allowance of a halfpenny per yard, he acceded to my request, and passed the invoice, to my great relief and astonishment at being "let off" comparatively easy. The allowance meant a reduction of six per cent from the invoice, which was bad enough, but also meant that in future buyers' visits to our establishment would probably be few and far between.

I believe there is no trading community in the world where money transactions were conducted so satisfactorily as in Manchester. On the day an account was due you might regard it with the

same equanimity as if the money were already deposited to your credit at the bank. Manchester was not to blame if my experience of it was contrary to this. It was not every buyer who would be so merciful as the one mentioned. Many in similar circumstances resolutely declined to pass invoices, and the cash, so much needed, was not forthcoming when often it was most urgently required.

There were only three persons employed at the warehouse. There had been five, but they were now reduced. There was a salesman, who was on the point of leaving, to be replaced by Mr. William Brownrigg, a man of so lively a nature and capacity for talking nonsense that he was spoken of in the city as "Gassy B." There was also a porter, Edward, and myself. Mr. B. was many years my senior, and had an extensive acquaintance with Manchester men (buyers) and their ways. He was not well educated, though he seldom did violence to the Queen's English beyond his irregular and eccentric aspirations, which, when he became emphatic, were very marked. After his arrival, I remarked the additional number of callers who visited our establishment; if they were not customers I was assured by Brownrigg they would very shortly prove themselves such. For some time scarcely an hour passed that some new face did not present itself, and if Brownrigg were absent the face with its belongings disappeared for the time being, to become visible again soon afterwards, and also familiar. From the large number of men he knew Brownrigg might have been a Freemason, but he

was not. I could not resist watching his movements with interest, and his keen eye soon made him conscious of the fact. It was obvious that in conjunction with his vast knowledge and experience he had abilities which should have secured him a much higher position than the one he was going to occupy in our warehouse. After we had arrived at a more intimate stage of our acquaintance I informed him of this view which I entertained of him. He professed gratification, and augured therefrom we should work amicably together. Our united aspiration was to raise the house of Thornton to a position of greater eminence than it hitherto occupied, and the first necessary step for the accomplishment of this object was to make a careful and exhaustive examination of the whole of the stock of cloth, which consisted of grey and finished goods. This proved a work of considerable time and labour. In its performance I had opportunities of observing the activity and aptitude of Brownrigg. He was an artist in his way, and I sometimes found myself watching with admiring eyes the manner he handled a piece of cloth. The removal of it from its previous resting-place; its passage in his arms to the counter, as if it were one of his own children; the severing of the cord which held it together; the unfolding and examination of each lap with his subtle fingers, as if it were material upon which bank notes were to be printed, were done with marvellous rapidity; the whole making quite a picture. His respective blessings or curses, as the case may be, which followed the examination of each piece were pronounced

with a promptness reminding one of Charles Mathews.

At the conclusion of this undertaking, in which the whole strength of the warehouse was engaged, and from which we emerged day after day in a besmeared and dusty condition, W. B. concluded the stock was not of that high order which would meet the requirements of his numerous friends in London, Glasgow, Dublin, and elsewhere. He had written out an imposing array of firms with which he was acquainted, and of whose continued support in his new position he was confident. Many of these names were new to me, and I hailed with delight the prospect of an extended business connection. We soon had evidence of the favour with which he was regarded, not only by the visits of old friends, who received and returned his interminable jokes and sallies, but also by the actual business which resulted.

I began to have visions of our future eminence. It had become evident, however, for its fulfilment that the stock must be augmented by the introduction of higher class fabrics, our own being deficient in quality as well as quantity. Now began our difficulties of action. To a limited extent we introduced other makes of cloth, with good results, but the operation was regarded with little favour by Mr. Thornton, who was naturally more anxious for the steady and regular disposal of his own manufactured goods than those of others. This view was quite reasonable, but the argument we enforced was to show that the sale of his cloth would be facilitated by our course of action. Mr. Thornton was not to be convinced, and for the

first time I found myself in conflict with him. We made good progress, however, Brownrigg attending to the preparation and disposal of finished goods, whilst I worked with the greys.

Our warehouse had become so busy it was necessary to have additional help, and that I should be relieved of the financing. Mr. Thornton engaged Mr. Speakes, an elderly gentleman, for his cashier, and also a younger man to assist in collecting, for the performance of which, through advanced years, Mr. Speakes was unequal. Brownrigg was indefatigable in his visits to the Royal, Queen's, Albion, and other hotels where his outside friends from the great towns were to be found when they made their periodical visits to Manchester for buying purposes. How well he knew them all, and they knew him! After escorting them in triumph to the warehouse, the banter and jests with the most of them became continuous, almost interrupting the necessary attention to the main object of it all, which was to make as large a sale as possible.

We were fairly good workers, except Mr. Speakes, who was rather inert, somewhat querulous, and metaphysical. Being also some thirty years (at least) older than any of us, he was not equal to the amount of toil we imposed upon ourselves. He used to express his surprise and sorrow that I should smile at Brownrigg's sallies, which he considered were often unseemly and inappropriate. Whilst agreeing cordially with Speakes that Brownrigg's mirth and humour often lacked edification, I was fain to apologetically hint that an occasional flash of wit was enlivening,

and its recognition not necessarily attended by ill consequences. I had to remind Mr. Speakes he had seen his day, having been the owner of three wives in his time (not all at once), and the progenitor of little Speakes innumerable, whilst we were comparatively juvenile. Surely his serious countenance and my smiling features were equally becoming.

CHAPTER VII.

FOREIGN CUSTOMERS—VISIT TO A COUNTRY MILL.

SOON after this period, a prominent merchant, who was one of our Levant customers, called with a pattern of an article which, if we could produce, he informed us that he and many others would take in large quantities. The pattern was left with us. Knowing it could not be produced at our own mill at Kearsley, we immediately communicated with a maker of similar cloth, who gladly offered to make it for us in unlimited quantity, and at a price which was satisfactory. Orders were taken, given out, satisfactorily executed, and a profitable business resulted.

The manufacturer belonged to the old school, and though very wealthy, was primitive in his style and manner of doing his business, which was extensive, being the production of six mills which he owned in the country, and where he turned out unlimited quantities of cloth. We became busy. Unfortunately our warehouse had no back entrance, and when large luries arrived laden with these goods, they had to be unpacked in the street, and passed into the cellar, the door of which opened from the main street, and under our office window. This was dangerous, as the Greek merchants were continually passing to and fro. They were active men, and their bright eyes appeared to see everything. If they should happen to recognise the cloth, and glance at

the maker's name and address, which were conspicuously marked on the lurry, it would immediately be known we were neither the makers nor the agents, but simply "middlemen," who are regarded by merchants as an expensive nuisance. They would then deal direct with the maker, with advantage to themselves. We were perplexed, especially as we could not have the deliveries made in early morn or late at night. The heavy loads always drove up in mid-day. We escaped detection for a considerable time—much longer than we ventured to hope for—but the end of our thriving transaction came at last. The article went out of demand, but not before we had made a good show.

Rarely a day passed that we had not the satisfaction of a visit from one or more of the handsome-featured, lithe-of-figure, and well-dressed Greek merchants—men with interminably long names—who doubtless regarded us with satisfaction whilst we supplied them with the coveted article. We had done a large business with the Greeks, whom we found honourable and high-minded men. My view of their integrity was not altogether shared by themselves. After making a morning's round of visits to my customers, on one occasion, I found myself in the office of one of these lively gentlemen. Whilst sitting in a luxurious arm-chair, with my swarthy patron lying at full length on a couch in front of me, smoking a cigarette, I was asked for some information, which I frankly gave. It was not, however, received in good faith. My interrogator shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, and

plainly said he did not believe me. Of course I was hurt in my feelings when I found my veracity thus impugned. Had he ever known me to tell him a falsehood? "No," was the reply, "but you have done so much business with Greeks, who are the biggest liars living, that you must have become one yourself by this time." I stood up for all those, without exception, whom I knew, in spite of this expression of opinion. A year or two later this vilifier of his countrymen absconded from the city, and I read his name and the description of his person, in large placards, on the walls of Manchester.

The manufacturing firm with which we did this satisfactory business has been for some years extinct as a firm. The proprietor, even so long ago, was approaching the allotted threescore years and ten. He had six grown-up sons, some of whom had families. They were all active men and engaged in their extensive business. From his frequent visits to our warehouse for the purpose of collecting accounts I became intimately acquainted with the youngest of the brothers, W. Renshaw. He managed the finance department of his father's firm. He was one year younger than myself—to my mind the best of all the brothers—certainly the best-looking, best educated, and the most agreeable in his manner. Moreover, he was a man of an open and generous nature. After seeing him so frequently, we, as might be expected, became friends, and he expressed a wish to introduce me to his parents and relations at home in the country. One Good Friday morning, when sitting alone at my

lodging, undecided how to pass the day, and whether I should go to church or not, a handsome four-wheeled drag, with equally handsome horse, driven by a well-dressed man, suddenly pulled up in front of my window. I recognized my new acquaintance. It being a holiday, he had come to ask me to accompany him to his home. I gladly responded to his request, and in a short time we were bowling along at fourteen miles an hour. I soon discovered he was a skilful driver. The day was frosty and fine, and the journey was delightful to one who had not for many months been absent from the town. Everything combined to enliven me—the weather, the country, the horse and trappings, the drag, and most of all my new acquaintance. On approaching his home, he directed my attention to the various mills belonging to his father. One or two of them were old-fashioned buildings, where I was informed he had begun his career; the others were modern, and some of them of imposing appearance. I was struck with the many brass bands we heard as we passed along, which he told me belonged to the various mills, each possessing its own. The music was chiefly sacred, and smartly played; the harmonies good, and time excellent.

Perhaps to make as favourable an impression as possible, I was introduced as an important customer. This recommendation was not needed by the old lady, his mother, who would welcome anyone who was a friend of her son. With his paternal, however, and brothers it might have gone for something. I was well received, as the introductions took place one by one to the brothers,

brothers' wives, wives' sisters, and young members. They had all their separate establishments, with the exception of my friend, who was single and lived with his parents, and we made the round of all of them. As the next day was to be regarded as a holiday, I agreed to spend it and the following Sunday with him, he promising to drive me back on the Monday morning. Up to that time of my existence I had never been made the occasion of an ovation. Now I was feted. We had so many invitations—to luncheon with one, to dine with another, take tea with a third, and so on—that the only time we could call our own and be together was during the breakfast meal, when the conversation was rapid and continuous. My friend, William Renshaw, possessed natural musical abilities, and he had a fair voice, which, with cultivation, would be an agreeable tenor. During the short time we were alone, he favoured me with a few tunes on his piano, showing a light graceful touch, and appreciation of melody.

The mills were all closed, but, as some repairs were going on, and I had a great desire to see them internally, an opportunity was afforded me of having my wish gratified. We must have tramped over many acres of flooring before the exploration was finished. I was much impressed with the weaving sheds, with their forests of looms, which I thought superb, and, I think, once or twice a feeling of envy of my friend crossed my mind. The spinning machinery had a grand effect, but now I was more devoted to that which produced cloth. On returning to the house, after a wash and a brush, I was taken to the kitchen, a

room of great size, with an enormous fire-place in which four persons might be comfortably seated. The country which I now was in was very hilly and bleak, and I contemplated the satisfaction with which four congenial spirits might pass a winter evening in the said fire-place. The walls of the kitchen were lined with crockery and metal dish-covers so bright you could see your reflection as you passed them. At a table, not very far from the fire-place, sat the dear old lady, reading her Bible. This was the third time I had seen her so employed in the same spot. W. told me she passed nearly all her time there, and was a constant reader of the grand old Book. I was much impressed with her wonderful devotion, the like of which I think I have never seen before or since.

On visiting the various members of the family, I had to inspect their pictures, try their pianos, and give my opinions thereon ; after which the stables had to be visited and crack mares and fast trotters to be seen, admired, and duly appreciated. After the final dinner party at one of the houses a decanter of wine was placed before me by the host, with the intimation that I was to appropriate the whole of it myself. Having never had the capacity of absorbing two glasses of wine consecutively even to this day, I smiled, and was on the point of passing on the decanter, when, in the most commanding and serious tone, I was informed I should have to drink it all myself. Renshaw told me afterwards, he trembled for me at that moment, as this particular relative felt insulted if his visitors did not appreciate his

hospitality by drinking the wine he placed before them, which was always of the best and oldest vintage to be obtained. Whatever had been the consequences, I should have remained resolute in declining the wine. A box of cigars, however, was placed in my hands simultaneously, and as they were small in size and looked mild in flavour, I offered to smoke if I might be relieved from taking the wine. To this he readily assented if I would smoke them all, a feat which I undertook to perform, and thus escaped an unpleasant dilemma. Mr. Thornton had taught me to smoke, and I had for some time been an appreciative blower of the weed. When eleven o'clock of that evening had arrived, the box contained sixteen cigars less than at the commencement, and I left the house with one in my mouth—I could do no more, though I would have carried off the box with me, had any encouragement to do so been given.

Most young men who have been blessed with a good home and are domesticated in their habits regard with watchful interest the lodging which they are to occupy after leaving the paternal roof, and to make it resemble as much as possible the scene of early days. In it they are to pass their solitary evenings and entertain their newly-formed acquaintances. It is not surprising therefore that they should, with anxious solicitude, select not only a suitable domicile, but one the mistress of which commands confidence and respect. Hitherto I had been fortunate, for with the exception of my first six months in Lancashire, which had been passed under the same roof with the Crewes pair,

my lodging had been my home and castle. On my arrival in Manchester, I found quarters in one of the long streets extending for a considerable distance on either side and at angles with Oxford Road. The houses were small; all of the same size, and built on the same plan. A friend described my sitting-room as one in which, when seated in the centre of it, you might, without moving from your position, stir the fire, ring the bell, close the door, and open the window. My lot was now cast with a newly-married couple whose conjugal experiences were most unhappy. I knew nothing of their antecedents, but their present life was one of continued disagreements, and unfortunately, they poured into my ear their serious objections to one another—the husband cruelly saying his wife was without mind, and the wife averring of her husband that he was without heart, and otherwise painting each other as black as they could. It was impossible for me to do more than express my regret that their lives were so unhappy, beyond making quotations and exhortations, which had no effect whatever. They seemed determined to hate each other. I could not decide which of them was the more to blame, and this inability on my part was resented somewhat by the unhappy pair. Madame, however, scored a success, when one morning, at 2 a.m., she called me up, in apparent distress, to request my assistance in putting her lord, who had returned home either ill or drunk, into his bed. I found him lying helplessly in the middle of the floor, in a suit of dress clothes, and with a white kid glove on one hand. There was no mistake about his

condition. I gave her the required assistance, and she established the fact of her husband's dissolute habits.

I was glad to get away from a probable repetition of such scenes, and took refuge in the home of a widow lady so far away as Hulme. She resided near St. George's Church, and her accommodation was good, but I did not like Hulme. Greenheys seemed to possess superior attractions for "young gentlemen requiring apartments," and before long I was installed in a pleasant house in Park Street, also with another widow. In those days Park Street had quite an open space at the Moss Lane end. There was scarcely a house between it and the fields associated with *Mary Barton*, so I considered myself living almost in the country. It was here where my friend William Renshaw found me on the Good Friday, when he drove up so fresh and welcome.

My room was perfect. I had parted with my old square "Broadwood," which had done me excellent service, selling it for within a trifle of what it cost me. In its place I had a showy German instrument, which was harsh in tone and too loud in the bass. It had a handsome case, however, and aided, with other accessories, to give my room an attractive appearance, which greatly delighted my old landlady, who was a demonstrative person, and had a weakness for passing compliments. Though she attempted to practice on the vanity of her lodger she was by no means a bad landlady. After a year's residence with her, I unfortunately hinted that the street was a dull one, when she suddenly took another house, in consequence of my

remarks, as she informed me. I afterwards discovered she had been compelled to remove from quite a different cause; but being ignorant of this at the time, she secured my occupation of her room in the new house in a neighbouring terrace for a considerable period. The house was no improvement on the old one.

CHAPTER VIII.

MANCHESTER IN THE TIME OF THE CRIMEAN WAR.

AN anxious time had now come upon Manchester. Thoughtful people saw war looming in the distance, and others a general European war. The bare prospect of war has a disquieting and injurious effect on a large trading community like Manchester. At such a time foreign politics have so great an influence upon cotton goods that they rise and fall with the regularity of a barometer; but there is a general tendency towards the fall, more especially in the manufactured article; and when a more than usually hostile telegram is posted on the Exchange, the fall is sensible and often serious. Altogether the situation is a grave one, with the prospect of yet lower prices, the curtailment of trade, and accumulation of stocks resulting in the inevitable resort to "short time," the bane of the manufacturer.

Admiral Sir Charles Napier, K.C.B., had arrived in our city. He was accompanied by Mr. David Urquhart, and they were announced to address a public meeting at the Corn Exchange, under the auspices of Alderman Watson as chairman. I loved a public meeting, had attended a liberal quantity of them, and was present at this one. The chairman, who was a fragile-looking old gentleman, seemed to me not quite at home with the burly-looking admiral on one side of him and

the ferocious-looking individual who accompanied him on the other. The chairman was, of course, warlike, though his feeble manner indicated the contrary. Scarcely a word he uttered could be heard at the spot where I was placed—hence the quiet way he was received by the “peace” party in the room. The Admiral was the first to speak. He delivered himself in blunt, John Bull manner; spoke contemptuously of the “peace-at-any-price” party, and was alternately cheered and hooted by the contending factions. But when he concluded his oration by emphatically declaring he was ready to go with his fleet to the Baltic and to shed the very last drop of his blood in their behalf, the applause was universal and tremendous. Sir Charles had scored a success. Not so with Mr. Urquhart, who followed him. The only thing I ever knew or can remember of Mr. Urquhart apart from this occasion is contained in a political alphabetical rhyme I once saw in a number of *Punch*. It ran—

U is for Urquhart, the Eastern intriguer;
V is for Villiers, the veteran Leaguer.

Mr. Urquhart's appearance was remarkable. He was of slight build, but well made; he was also well dressed. His manner was inclined towards that of haughtiness. His hair, however, attracted the most observation from its golden hue, not red by any means, but the colour of real gold, and which had accumulated heavily at the eyebrows and moustache, with only an average quantity on the head and none whatever in the form of whisker. He had fierce-looking eyes and an oratorical pro-

mise about him which excited my expectations. Before he had very long begun his address I imagined him to have lived a great while in India, during which time he had accumulated caloric of a supply unlimited, which he now was unbottling with unstinted measure.

Beyond these effects and his gesticulations, however, I was doomed to disappointment, as nothing of his utterances reached the spot where I was sitting. He did, however, express some words in a rasping manner—what they were I never knew—which disturbed the gallant Admiral, who roared out to him in reply and without rising, the words, “That shows how much you know about it.” Mr. Urquhart was so unprepared for this explosion that he was suddenly pitched into a hostile House of Commons attitude, and stood speechless, with his hands resting on his hips and his eyes upon the Admiral. It signified nothing that he resented this interruption by looking at his disturber with the fury of a Bengal tiger, he was met with the stern and angry look of the British lion. For a moment or two after these expressive exchanges of glances they stood declaiming at each other with furious animation.

The little old gentleman in the chair was apparently in a position of frightful danger to himself—sitting as he was between the angry disputants, he might be gobbled up at any moment to enable them the better to grapple with each other. But no! he actually arose, and in a peaceful, conciliatory tone requested the Lion and the Tiger to stop their roaring and afford him the opportunity of explaining to the meeting the

cause of this unexpected duel ; for I am certain not one in a hundred had the faintest conception of the cause of it. As well might he have presented his request to the Falls of Niagara as to expect silence there. The whole room, too, was now in commotion, and the din of noise confounding. The Admiral had said his say, but Mr. Urquhart had only partially expressed his sentiments. The meeting was something to be remembered. Almost every man on the platform essayed to speak, each doubtless thinking he had sufficient influence with his fellow-citizens to obtain a hearing. The occasion must have been a trying one to the *amour propre* of many a gentleman who had to retire in disgust. The scene was like the effect which might be produced by a large orchestra, each member of which is playing a melody distinct from every other, both in time and tune—the oboes and flutes, with fiddles, cellos, and double bass, horns and trumpets, bassoons and trombones, with the occasional thump of a drum, of each man endeavouring to make his particular strain heard above the rest. The “peace” men must have experienced the most indefinable sensations, and many with the martial turn were animated with the desire to retire quietly from the scene.

How is it all to end ? Nobody will listen to anybody. Had George Wilson been there, his powers would have been put to the test ! Rescue from the disturbance came at last in the most unexpected manner. An insignificant-looking individual was seen hurriedly to make his way to the front part of the platform ; his low stature

and disproportionate energy bore him past every obstacle. The effect of this sudden appearance of so small a man facing the audience was comical and striking enough to gradually close the mouths and cause all eyes to be turned towards the daring individual. The noise was rapidly subsiding, but the first word that issued from his lips, which was delivered in a voice of thunder, produced on the audience the stillness of the ocean calm after a tempest. The combination of almost minimum dimensions with the maximum of lung power in this "Boanerges" was sufficient to convert one of the noisest meetings ever assembled into one the most silent and attentive. He for a short time made capital from the familiar manner he spoke of Lord Palmerston and his "gallant friend the Admiral," but after some platitudes it soon became apparent to everybody his speech was *vox et præterea nihil*, and he had to make a speedy exit from the front, after the perpetration of a splendid, innocent hoax. I heard afterwards the little man was a baker. He thought perhaps the great man's extremity might prove the little one's opportunity. After this departure the noise recommenced, but eventually Doctor Vaughan, whose influence was always respected, rose and pacified, if he did not satisfy, the majority, by a "philosophical" explanation of matters as they stood.

Soon after this time our Government "drifted" into war with Russia, and the dreaded results in Manchester followed. Our business was one of the first to suffer, and the "survival of the fittest" theory was practically demonstrated.

The home trade houses all over the country stopped their buying operations; and the shipping houses, not knowing how the war might extend to other nations not yet involved, also withdrew from the markets. I remember only one advantage the war brought us—the Army Commissariat Department required cloth for making tents, and we supplied them with a quantity through a London house. It was fortunate that our particular article was suitable. We had a large quantity of it, and to our great relief the whole of the stock was cleared out. There were many piles of these goods which had long remained in our cellar, occupying so much of the space as to render it not only dark but uninhabitable, by depriving it of air circulation. We heard that these goods were shipped for the Crimea in the Prince transport ship, which was lost with many valuable lives. The order was not repeated.

The Athenæum in those days, though not the flourishing institution it has since become, was in favour with young men. It was then under the management of Dr. Hudson. Most of the young men coming to Manchester were expected to become members of the Athenæum, to which they were promptly introduced by some friend already in the enjoyment of membership. Edward Phelps, my friend with the mania for old engravings, acted as my *introduceur*. It was an attractive institution, with a president, vice-presidents, treasurer, librarian, and an enterprising committee of intelligent young men. Mr. Samuel Ogden, I believe, was the president, and, if I mistake not,

is so now, notwithstanding the long lapse of years. Delightful concerts of classical music were given from time to time in the Library of the building. The Library itself was a poor one, the books dirty, and the missing volumes, of which there were many, seemed never to reappear.

But there were other advantages, such as Dramatic and Chess Clubs, French, German, Spanish, and Italian classes—classes, indeed, for every European nationality—and an excellent Debating Society. I remember once finding myself in the miniature House of Commons of the institution. One of the members was on his legs, and my movements were accordingly hushed into instant silence. I gathered the subject of discussion was India, and the youthful orator who was speaking wore the aspect of a man upon whose head and shoulders lay the whole weight of governing the great dependency. To listen to his urgent appeals to honourable members on the opposite side of the House to be convinced and converted by his array of facts and figures, backed by eloquence and argument, formed a striking contrast with the frivolous conversation going on below in the smoke-room. I did not wait the completion of the debate on India, but I came away with the impression that I had been listening to a future statesman, which, doubtless, he might be whenever he chooses to relinquish the editorship of the best weekly paper published in Manchester.

In the chess-room I occasionally tried my strength with one of two brothers, who, like myself, were strangers in Manchester. They had

been sent up by their papa, who was a well-to-do medical practitioner in one of the midland counties, that they might become wealthy Manchester merchants, and at that time were serving their articles of apprenticeship in two of the leading houses. They often came to my quarters when we renewed our chess proclivities, accompanied with "churchwardens," and otherwise spent the evenings in discussing the relative merits of many of the leading firms with their buyers and other employes. Quiet, gentlemanly fellows were the two brothers, Benjamin and Jack Woodley. X I wonder how Manchester has fared with them!

Not yet being a member of the Royal Exchange my source of information from the seat of war was the telegrams posted in the reading-room, which I perused anxiously every morning and evening when going to and from the warehouse. Dr. Hudson had a plan of the seat of war conspicuously exhibited, in which the relative positions of the respective forces of English, French, Turkish, Sardinian, and Russian troops were indicated by different coloured pins.

Business dragged fearfully; customers vanished. There was nothing to be done except through an occasional "forced" sale, which incurred loss, without sensibly reducing the accumulated stock. Our buying and selling business, which had begun so auspiciously and continued with such good results, was nipped in the bud; and all our efforts were directed to keeping down the ever-increasing stock. Mr. Thornton came frequently over from the mill with care on his brow and discontent in

X *Benj and John Wood.*

his countenance—moreover, he made unpleasant insinuations, which were overlooked by us under the circumstances.

Communities like individuals adapt themselves to circumstances. We gradually became familiarized with the war. Every now and then appeared for the moment a prospect of restoration to peace, with a simultaneous improvement of business, and we looked with avidity for such revivals, which frequently occurred; but at length we came to regard the hostile condition as a normal one. The war lasted over two years, and we ceased to think much about it in regard to its effects upon commerce, and jogged along as well as we could. Our expenses at the warehouse, now increased by the additional staff, were disproportionately heavy for the work done, especially as no profits were made from outside sources. I had for some time contemplated making a start for myself and thus to relieve somewhat the burden, but in what shape I should make a commencement I could not determine. I mentioned the subject to Mr. Thornton, with whom I was free and open to speak. He offered me a partnership, and indeed was willing to do anything to promote my interests, but unwilling we should be separated. He had given up his residence at Kearsley, and his family was now living in a house near Pendleton. Here I found myself, evening after evening, discussing his as well as my own probable future movements, for he too contemplated a change of some kind or other, though what he could scarcely define; but it was clear we should for some time longer be inseparable.

Anxiety for the future, and that of the past, brought on a severe attack of liver congestion, and on one Sunday morning, when I had intended spending a pleasant day at his house with him and his family, as had been my custom since his arrival at Pendleton, I discovered I had passed a restless night, and was troubled with pains and sickness. I would have given all I was worth to throw off these symptoms, but my efforts were hopelessly unavailing, and my landlady's doctor was sent for. The doctor was a well known practitioner living in Burlington Street,^x and her estimation of him was that he was a wonderful man. She emphatically informed me, "He had always pulled her young gentlemen through when anything ailed them." He found me very ill, and provided me with a blister, informing me that my malady was caused by anxiety. To my horror, he said I should have to leave Manchester "to take care of itself" without my aid, and go to the West of England for three months; at the expiration of which time, however, he promised I should return in the physical condition necessary for the commencement of making a fortune. I passed several delirious nights, during which I was battling continually with figures which would not add up, and accounts which would not balance. Another visit followed from the doctor and the application of a more potent blister. I had a visit from W. Meadows and some other friends, who considered my condition alarming.

A good constitution, never impaired by excess, brought me through faster than the doctor had anticipated, and when he called the next time, I

had flown! Mrs. Thornton had taken me in a cab to her house to nurse me herself. The landlady afterwards told me the doctor held up his hands in mute astonishment at my unexpected departure. The same night, at eleven o'clock, my mother arrived at my lodging, from Bath, to find I had gone. My officious landlady informed her of my perilous condition, and that but for her assiduous watchfulness my mother might then be deploring the loss of her son. On the following morning, after passing a miserable, sleepless night, at the end of her long journey, the doctor again called, and congratulated my mother on her son's capacity for throwing off a severe attack so speedily. In an hour afterwards I was astonished by the announcement of my maternal in my new quarters, by Mrs. Thornton, who, it appears, had written to her, the circumstances being considered sufficiently serious to warrant such a step. I had begun reading *Dombey and Son*, and at that moment was wondering how "Fanny" was to make the requested "effort," feeling very weak myself, when my mother's unexpected appearance almost caused me to faint.

I spent the allotted three months pleasantly enough in the West of England. I had no end of young relatives who had come into the world since I left that part of it, and the young uncle found himself in the thick of nephews and nieces, who formed little colonies here and there. It took me some time to learn them off by heart—indeed some of them required considerable study. I could recognize amongst them, here and there, a rising genius, and they were all good-looking

without an exception, especially the girls. I had also opportunities of visiting my valued friend Alfus Banham. I had not seen him since his wedding day, when, of course, I was present, doing duty as one of his chief men. He was now engaged in scholastic work in Bristol. He had a sweet little cottage, in which with himself, his wife, and a little son and daughter, I lived a pleasant week, so pleasant indeed as never to be forgotten. My sister took me to a picnic on Salisbury Plain, where I found myself singing "*Dell' aura tua profetica*" with such vigour that some of the party thought I must be taking leave of my senses. It was not so, however. The Druidical stones recalled Manchester, where I had recently heard Formes in the chief priest's part in *Norma*, and a consciousness of returning health assured me I should be there again before long. My brother-in-law had a mare who, instead of trotting, ran like a dog. I shall never forget the way he and I returned over the soft velvet-like grass plain. The effect was like travelling in a sledge.

Whilst at home I received a letter from Mrs. Thornton informing me her husband had been seriously unwell during my absence. The doctor had pronounced his malady to be one which could only be met by his being continually in the society of some congenial friend. Mrs. Thornton considered I was the only person who would take the role. She only briefly alluded to the state of her husband's business, which she thought was going from bad to worse. On my return to Manchester I went direct to his house to take up my abode

there as arranged. I found that in my absence Mr. Brownrigg, Mr. Speakes, the assistant collector, and Edward, together with the warehouse building, had all been placed under notice.

Mr. Thornton, who was fertile in ideas, had formed a scheme, and he made a proposal that I should begin business, and as a nucleus for it he would consign the whole of his cloth to me; whilst I, on the other hand, should take suitable premises, affording him the small office accommodation he might require. This proposition met my cordial approbation. It would not only relieve him of a great responsibility and be an important stroke by way of retrenchment, but it opened up a prospect also for myself. I took suitable premises, which comprised a commodious cellar, a saleroom, and an office, the whole being a portion of a large warehouse in a square of buildings in the old locality. In my ledger, which I have preserved, I find the first business entry was made on 30th July, 1855. W. Brownrigg found the employment he had coveted in the warehouse of my friend W. Renshaw, where he revelled in "quantity and quality." The old cashier, Mr. Speakes, retired on his limited income into private life, whilst the collector who assisted him found advancement in an adjoining establishment, and Edward, in his old capacity of porter, followed me and became a member of my establishment.

I engaged a lad, whom I remember was called Arthur, as clerk and office boy, and with the addition of attractive letters in gold on either side of the door, indicating to the outside world my name and occupation, I was then, as I thought,

in a position to become an important item in the city. A good-natured uncle, who was interested in his lively young nephew's efforts, kindly placed one thousand pounds at my disposal in one of the banks.

CHAPTER IX.

CONTINUANCE OF THE RUSSIAN WAR—LIFE IN A SUBURB.

I LOST no time in issuing circulars to the whole of Mr. Thornton's customers, informing them he had placed the disposal of his wares in my hands, and promising them a continuance of that devotion to their interest which had so long characterized their transactions with his house. The list of names to whom I sent the circular comprised a goodly number of the best houses, and from the majority I received congratulations and promises of support.

In speaking of a house, the buyer is generally understood, as in many instances the members of a firm have no knowledge of the men who supply them. It is sufficient for them that the head of a department shows a good return when the time of "stock-taking" arrives. The buyers looked me up with interest, not unmixed with curiosity, and the quidnuncs called in quantity. Before I had been any length of time in swing, I discovered my greatest difficulty would be, not in procuring customers, of which I had sufficient, but in obtaining such commodities, and in such quantity, as would meet their requirements. With this fact in view, I laid my plans for securing consignments from manufacturers; in other words, to find men who would send me the whole of their production

of cloth, or a portion of it, to sell on commission. To obtain my object I devoted a day or two in each week to calling upon such country makers as I thought would be likely to respond to my solicitations. Very little or no results followed from these efforts, so I had to devise other methods for the furtherance of commerce. There were a few small men from whom we had made purchases when in the old place, and these men I carefully looked up and nursed. They would, however, none of them sell on commission. They preferred selling their cloth themselves. In doing so they saved the amount for commission; they could select their customers, and knew better by so-doing how and where they stood. But they would be pleased to sell to me as they had hitherto done to the old firm, and give me any occasional advantage that might arise.

I mentally measured the capacity of the thousand pounds sterling lying at the bank, and how far it would go, and then selecting one favourite maker I entered into a contract with him for many weeks to supply me with more than the half of his production. I would have taken the whole of it had he permitted me, but he preferred not to put "the whole of his eggs into one basket." I trafficked considerably in this cloth, which became a favourite one, but it was necessary the maker's individuality should remain unrecognised. To secure this desideratum I had my own devised combination of coloured stripes woven into the beginning and end of each piece, or, to use a technical phrase, had them made up with "private headings." I had the advantage of

a second entrance through a back street to my premises, where luries could be unloaded away from inquisitive eyes. This particular cloth had many good properties. It was sold for bleaching. It was regular in the weight, full in the pick, counting 14 square, round in the thread, free from unnecessary size, and measured $36\frac{1}{2}$ inches to the yard. It was defective in colour, but as it was to be converted into a "Croydon" there was no objection made to it on that head. The cloth became known to the "white" men, who pursued it from all quarters. So favourite a fabric did it become that the selling of it gave me a reputation, I urged the old salesman (I never saw the maker himself) to "put on more looms"—to build another shed—do anything, indeed, to produce more of his cloth. But all was vain. I could only obtain from him a small proportion of the quantity I would have gladly taken.

It was amusing frequently, when a new comer arrived at the warehouse, to make a conjecture as to the object of his visit. The conclusion often arrived at was generally the right one. "Have you anything in 32-inch suitable for Croydons?" After showing him everything in the place but the one I knew he was in search of, he would at length alight on the coveted article. When it had passed the ordeal of his experienced eye and well accustomed handling, it was in vain the buyer affected indifference. Though he knew already the virtues of the cloth he "doubted very much if it would bleach well;" nevertheless, at a reduction of an eighth per yard (I did not benefit frequently more than a quarter of that sum—viz.,

one thirty-second of a penny per yard) he would "take all I could make for six months." Another gentleman belonging to the "whites," with the appreciative faculty, made my acquaintance for the object of "encouraging early efforts." He, however, succeeded in persuading me to take an unusually large order, which I found a difficulty in executing except by curtailing deliveries to others, which I neither contemplated nor desired. Notwithstanding his benevolent professions and estimable intentions, he one day so lost sight of his original motive that in his inability to "corner" the calico he left me in anger, and I never saw him again. What a cloth that was! And yet it did not secure a fortune for its maker. Indeed, I believe he lost money by it. It was made near Rochdale, and the shed has since been converted into a machine shop.

An Australian shipper called on me during the second week of my proprietorship, and gave me an extensive order for finished goods, comprising a great variety of lots, none of which exceeded thirty yards in length. It was a tedious affair in its execution, but I realized £40 from the transaction. My old colleague Brownrigg kept a watchful eye on my movements, and was a frequent visitor. His curiosity to know how I was progressing was so intense I had to inform him I was then making at the rate of two thousand per annum, though of course I could not calculate with any degree of certainty upon this result lasting. Brownrigg was hardly prepared for this announcement, and made no more inquiries.

Notwithstanding this windfall I was not satisfied

with my progress. I wanted more cloth. I could sell unlimited quantities of the right kind could I only obtain it. My business was a source of pleasure to me as far as it went, and during the first year I had justification for the hope of making it one of importance. The Russian war continued, but it was generally spoken of in connection, either with the blundering of the Government (until Lord Palmerston took the premiership) or the reckless bravery of the English soldier and the cowardice of the Muscovite. Its effect on trade had been discounted. At the end of the first year I found my income had exceeded by a little that of any previous one. This I was told to regard as a case of success; so I endeavoured to feel satisfied.

Mr. Thornton improved in health after I went to reside with him, and I became to some extent like one of his household, entering into their various amusements, joining in their occasional festivities, and sometimes attending with them at their place of worship. Many friendships were formed during the time I abode with the Thorntons, who were socially inclined, and drew together select little circles, intellect and wealth being sometimes conspicuously represented. There were numerous relations, in the shape of sisters-in-law and step-sisters, all married or going to be, with their husbands and fiancés, who gathered festively from time to time at the house, which was so enlivened as to cause the time to pass with too rapid a flight. Amongst the many guests was Mr. J. S. Baring, a Londoner. He was the youngest son of an old friend of our hostess, and occasionally came over on a visit. He was not

tall in figure but inclined somewhat to rotundity, and carried an agreeable expression on his handsome face. He was quite a ladies' man, dressing well, and with an appearance so neat that he gave one the idea that had he worked in a boiler flue for a week he would have emerged therefrom as bright as a new sixpence! For many years our pens did active service in perpetuating a friendship begun under these happy auspices.

But another change was about to be made. Mr. Thornton discovered that he had not acted judiciously in removing from Kearsley, where, as his dilapidated mill became more ruinous, it was necessary for him to be continually present. It was a trying time for him. He had been relieved of his warehouse cares—if he could only find similar relief from those of his mill, which were gradually, but surely, becoming crushing, he might have a season of freedom. There were, however, three years of his lease which were unexpired, and his landlord's executors, the owner having recently died, were not just the men to forego their rights and privileges. The parting came, not unmixed with a tinge of sadness, and the removal was effected.

I obtained another lodging in the vicinity of Greenheys and the Oxford Road, where I soon settled down to my bachelor existence, which, however, was a more pleasant one than any preceding portion of it. I sold my German piano to my friend Renshaw, who was now living in my old lodging, which he had occupied from the time of my departure from it. He took my rooms, and also the pianoforte. In the place of the latter I

provided myself with a Boudoir direct from Collard's factory, securing the maximum of quality with only a moderately handsome exterior. The arrival of this beautiful instrument made a sensation, not only in the house where it was quartered but in the street itself. A young German professor of music, newly arrived from the Continent, occupied the room above me. As he had only a hired instrument of inferior tone and construction for his use, his self-made introduction to me was a work of short time. He would, without knocking at my door, walk into the room, with a bundle of music under his arm, with the request that I "vood permit him to studee for von our on de new pi-a-no." I gave him the heartiest of welcomes, and he would immediately plunge into the depths of the finest classical compositions. He pronounced the pi-a-no to be perfect, and I passed the same eulogium upon his playing, which was of a high order. I was qualified to pronounce judgment, having been familiar with much of his music from my early days as interpreted by my brother Walter, who was a recognised genius. He and I had been separated for many years, which seemed now to return as night after night we revelled, the Deutcher on the newly-found piano, and I as a listener to him. When the room became hot and the atmosphere opaque with tobacco smoke, the window was thrown up, when the pavement on either side of the street had become a promenade. Somehow the passers-by seemed to forget whither they were going, and lingered, perhaps to hear unexpectedly the finished execution of a prelude of Mendelssohn or a charming morceau of Stephen Heller

(whose pianoforte music Mr. Charles Hallé at that time was introducing to Manchester) executed with consummate neatness and effect. My bachelor and other friends, who were not a few, found me out—especially those who were keen on harmony. Life was so pleasant for a year or more, apart from business, that the remembrance of it causes me to linger on the social aspect of my chequered experiences.

My Collard and I afterwards removed to a commodious residence in a more rural suburb. I heard of this attractive place, and having with Renshaw made an inspection of it which was satisfactory, it resulted in our taking the best four rooms in the house, and we then lived under one roof. My rooms were the more imposing, but R., being an affluent individual, he soon made up for this deficiency by the superior quality of his surroundings. My bookcase was of good size, and made to my own pattern, and contained a moderate number of standard and other works. He ordered one from the same maker, of the same pattern, and so much larger than mine as to hold some sixty more volumes. My Collard, though a gem, was but a Boudoir; he bought one by the same maker, which was a foot and a half longer, being a semi-grand. My collection of vocal and other music could not be improved upon, so he cut the matter short by purchasing the whole of it from me, giving the marked price on each copy, I throwing in the cost of the binding.

But the race for pre-eminence was not yet ended. My walls were hung with some lovely water-colour drawings, whilst his boasted of worn

impressions of inferior engravings. The difficulty here was also surmounted by his buying them all, *en bloc*, as they hung upon the walls. My office lad's father was a picture-frame maker, and did all my work. He was soon in requisition towards the formation of another "hang," which in a few weeks, with the aid of the contents of my portfolios, was accomplished, with results more brilliant than those which attended the first display. But I was still nowhere. Doomed to play a second part, I accepted the inevitable, and Renshaw became the owner of "hang" No. 2. I was contemplating yet another "hang," when a circumstance of an untoward nature arose.

My friend was a judge of horse flesh. Our establishment afforded coachhouse, and stable accommodation, for it was a good residence, with extensive premises. There was also a suitable ground for the game of quoits. Fresh milk, butter, and eggs were in close proximity to us, through the neighbourhood of a farmer who had thirty head of cattle browsing in an adjoining meadow.

It was not surprising that Renshaw should indulge his predilection by the introduction to our establishment of a horse and drag and a groom. The horse was a handsome one—16 hands, with clean fetlocks, and a good stepper.

The drag and harness were the best Manchester could produce, and the groom, who was an Irishman, was a model of a groom. He only once waited at table that I can remember. My rides to and from business and drives into the country were so frequent that I began to find myself growing stout and attributed the degenerating tendency

to lack of exercise. The threatened obesity, however, received a check, and soon ceased to be a matter for disquietude. One morning R. came home with a long face, and whispered to me, "The bailiffs are in the house!" The information scared me on reflecting on the amount of valuable property he possessed in it. I had been thinking recently, our state of happiness was too good to last.

Fortunately I had a slight acquaintanceship with the agent for the property, who doubtless had put the man into possession. I went to him and explained our position, as lodgers. He relieved me of all anxiety. Our landlord soon after satisfied the claims made upon him for rent, and the bailiffs disappeared. Renshaw was, however, disgusted with the circumstances, and fearing any future complications he removed, with the whole of his belongings, including piano, pictures, horse drag, and the Irishman.

The prompt decision of my friend in his departure led me to conclude he had ulterior objects in making so speedy an exit. Hints had now and then been dropped which caused me to conclude he was contemplating an establishment of his own. The acquisitions, too, which he had made since we lived together, were of themselves almost sufficient to furnish a house.

I had no such visions of the immediate future myself, and remained a solitary occupant of my pleasant quarters.

CHAPTER X.

THE ART TREASURES EXHIBITION—CHARLES HALLÉ. OPERA.

IT was May, 1857, the never-to-be-forgotten year of picture lovers. The Art Treasures Exhibition had been opened with great *eclat* by the Queen and Prince Albert, and for six months was to remain the glory of Manchester and one of the chief topics of the day.

The Exhibition contained the cream of art, collected from the highest sources. Royalty and nobility, with millionaires by the score, vied with each other in contributing the best of their treasures, which, when gathered together, formed such a collection as the world, it was supposed, had not previously seen. Although it was not then I had first heard that "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever," I was brought into a feeling of sympathy with the poet who penned the words. My business was so quiet at that time, for want of material and other causes, that my presence in the afternoons was rarely needed for its supervision. Being free, therefore, to turn them to the best account, I devoted them to the Exhibition. To mount the roof of an omnibus and be transplanted to Old Trafford became a regular occurrence.

On my first entrance to the building, which was erected by Paxton on a similar plan to that of the London Great Exhibition of 1851, the

effect of beholding just so much as the eye could take in at a glance of this forest of pictures was to cause my knees to tremble with emotion, and to become temporarily deaf! I have never yet met any friends sufficiently physiological to satisfactorily account for this peculiar result. Had I become blind through giddiness the explanation would not be far to seek. So recently as 1880 I slightly experienced a similar sensation when going through the Louvre Gallery. If the contemplation of High Art in prodigious masses produces deafness, the enjoyment of Music, on the same principle, should cause blindness. It never has affected me beyond the desire to close the eyes, the better for the music to be undisturbed by visible objects. On turning my back upon the first scene which so curiously affected me, my eye alighted on Gainsborough's "Blue Boy," who looked so life-like, handsome, and jolly, that I contemplated him for a long time. I cared nothing for the criticisms which I had read about this individual. The enjoyment of beholding the young fellow, with his healthy-looking countenance, and the folds of his deliciously blue garments, was of the highest. The Queen's picture of "Charles I.," by Vandyke, had also a rivetting tendency. These two works should have been enough for one afternoon, but I must go through the building; and I went through it, with no return of deafness, and feeling no more emotions. I loitered until the strains of Charles Hallé's Orchestra were heard commencing some familiar operatic selections, which were the signal for leaving the pictures; "one thing at a time"

being one of my mottoes. Hallé had recently returned from the Continent, where he had been occupied in selecting the finest performers on their various instruments to be obtained for "love or money;" and these formed a large portion of the orchestra now assembled for the first time in Manchester. The orchestra remains in undiminished excellence and increased strength to this day; but how many of its members have passed away and been replaced by others since 1857!

After hearing Mr. Hallé's orchestra play, say, Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* or the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the thought arises, can any of these men be so human as to die? With what perfection that harmonious cluster work together! Death must be a relentless foe to detach any member from that compact little army, so finely adjusted and complete in organization. How their faces became familiarized! Even now, doubtless, there are some left of that original gallant band doing duty on every Thursday evening from October until the following March, and still instructing and delighting thousands upon thousands of thirsty musical souls, as they did at the Art Treasures in 1857!

I knew well one member of that popular body. He was greatly esteemed by the great *maestro*, and under his enduring and unerring baton begun and completed his Manchester career. Apart from his musical genius he was a man of high attainments. Any community is honoured and elevated by the presence of such a one in its midst. His valuable life closed shortly before my

departure from Manchester. I am frequently reminded, when a piece of violoncello music crops up, of his earnest though unavailing efforts to make me an efficient performer on that instrument.

At a distance of four miles from Manchester lies the little township of Fairfield, which mostly belongs to the Moravians. There exists there a large school, abounding in traditions and associations with Manchester men, many of its distinguished citizens having there been educated. The principal of the school many years ago was Mr. Clare. He was a man of genial temperament, though sometimes absent-minded. He was an Irishman, and possessed the traditional humour of his countrymen, which never failed to manifest itself under any and all circumstances. He was popular with the boys, and a devotee of the violoncello and other instruments. We were very intimate, and my visits to Fairfield were frequent. There were generally some five or six masters in the establishment, which was a flourishing one, and I found myself often in their private sitting-room, participating in their recreations after the day's toil. Mr. Höhn was a conspicuous figure there; and though a quiet man, yet he seemed to be the presiding influence. He was a man who would cause one to wish himself young once more—to return to school life, and have him for a master. There was little that he could not do. He drew well, he sang with a cultivated tenor voice, and he was poetical. On one occasion he sat carelessly on the dining-table, copying or composing music, when from some cause he had to leave hurriedly. On his return he found that the servant in laying

the table-cloth had spread havoc over his unfortunate production, and she appeared to have resorted to a licking process. Höhn, though a good-tempered man, was much vexed, indeed he was angry, until he relieved himself by penning the following lines, which he afterwards put into my hands, and which I reproduce, as they are as fresh now as in the early days :—

Sing, O muse, the sad disaster
I was called on to endure,
Which no draught or sticking plaister,
Pill or globule e'er could cure.

On the table, all unspotted,
Lay my music, copied neat ;
When the servant went and blotted
With the inkstand one whole sheet.

What came next I scarce can utter—
Better were it left unsung !
She, the servant, in a flutter,
Tried to cleanse it with the tongue.

Oh, the mess that now resulted,
From each new polluted stain ;
All the paper was insulted,
Penknife scratched the blots in vain.

Could a moral, think you, ever
From this blotted sheet be wrung ?
When in error, ladies, never
Spoil the matter with the tongue !

Höhn, with myself, spent many a pleasant hour in the enjoyment of music. The first opera I heard was in his company and that of one of his colleagues, whose sight was gradually departing from him, but who found consolation in his love for music. The opera was *Fidelio*. Cruvelli took the part of Leonora, Zelger that of Rocco, and

Florestan was represented by the great Tamberlik. The performance was considered to be almost perfect. The music was, of course, of the highest order. My introduction, therefore, to opera was a good one; and during the few succeeding years, when the enthusiasm reached its height, I became a keen and discriminating observer. I heard Mario, Grisi, Viardot Garcia, Alboni, Bosio, Gassier, Titiens, Piccolomini, and Reichardt, Giuglini, Formes, Beletti, and a host of other less-celebrated singers as they arrived season after season. Jenny Lind and the Lablaches I had heard in my youngest days. I was present at the first performance in Manchester of *Il Trovatore*, when Graziani took the part of the Count, Tamberlik of Manrico, Grisi of Leonora, and Viardot Garcia of the Gipsy woman. Verdi, I thought, was happy to have such interpreters for a first rendering. It was a triumph. The demand on the next day for "Il balen," "Del suo sorrismo?" "Ah! che le morte" was something unprecedented in the annals of music selling. *Don Giovanni* was of all the operas the greatest favourite of the musical portion of Manchester. I once heard it given with Mario as the great libertine, Grisi as Donna Anna, Gassier as Zerlina, Giuglini as Don Ottavio, and Beletti as Leporello, the best Leporello that ever came before an orchestra. Indeed I once heard the late lamented leader of Mr. Halle's orchestra affirm of Beletti he was the best living singer of his day, male or female. No higher praise could be accorded to an artist than to be pronounced a favourite with the orchestra by its leader. Many enthusiastic

amateur and other tenors attended to hear Giuglini's rendering of "Il mio tesoro." Giuglini made a good impression. The quality of his voice and the perfect finish of his execution established his reputation as the first living tenor. His career was a very short one. At this performance of *Don Giovanni* there was a hitch in the working of the machinery. In the last scene, when the demons appeared to take the irrepressible Don to his final place of retribution, the trap door would not move downwards, and the favourite libertine, amidst the laughter of everybody, escaped his doom.

Viardot Garcia once produced a sensation in her singing of "Il segreto per esser felici" in *Lucrezia Borgia*. Mario, who was taking the part of Gennaro, watched her with astonishment, and at the end of the song forgot for the moment he was not one of the audience, and applauded her with vehemence. *Norma* was once a memorable performance, with Grisi as the Priestess, Tamberlik as Pollione, and Formes as Oroveso. Tamberlik afterwards was seldom seen. I heard, however, that the great *tenore robusto* is singing away now somewhere at seventy years of age.

An attempt to obtain an encore from Herr Formes was once made after one of the closing acts in *Don Giovanni*. The audience was determined, and so was he, and there was no encore. When he appeared to sing in the next scene he was vigorously hissed, and a commotion ensued. At so unheard-of an exhibition of feeling in the midst of one of the finest performances ever listened to, the great basso strode up to the

footlights, and with a look of indignant anger, and arms folded, faced the audience until the dissatisfied ones were awed into silence and the music proceeded. I wondered much how he could sing again after such a *contretemps*. Bosio, whose career was a short one also, once visited Manchester. I heard her in *Fra Diavolo*. Many years afterwards, in speaking of her at a public dining-table to the leading amateur tenor of the city, he showed such unfeigned delight in meeting a person who was present at that marvellous display of her singing as to beg my acceptance of half-a-crown in commemoration of the event. The waiter, into whose pocket the coin found its way, expressed a desire that "the late Mrs. Bosio" would again make her appearance. During recent years a series of four operas were given on behalf of the Infirmary funds, and Titiens was announced to sing in *Norma*. *Lucia di Lammermoor* was substituted, Madame Titiens being too ill to appear. She never sang again, and died soon afterwards. The performance of *Lucia* was poor, and I have never heard an opera since.

The summer was a fine one, and the influx of visitors to Manchester was enormous. The building of the Art Treasures at Old Trafford was capable of accommodating unlimited numbers without inconvenience. On a cheap entrance day, when an unusually large number of visitors came from all parts of Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Cheshire, to participate with the more favoured Manchester citizens in the rare intellectual feast provided for them, it was sometimes difficult to examine various works which were especially

popular. In front of these were gathered little crowds of spectators too dense to be penetrated. On such occasions no loss of time ensued in deferring the inspection of *one* particular picture for a future visit. There were others of equal or superior merit in its immediate neighbourhood that would satisfy the cravings of the most inordinate lover of pictures. There were two pictures by Linnell of moderate dimensions, one showing a cornfield with a glowing effect of sunset, the other representing "Early Spring," with the green corn just bursting into life from the soil. These never failed to attract a cluster of worshippers. From the moment the building was opened to that when it closed, the devotees crowded to this spot, keeping up the perpetual adoration. But the idol of the public was the "Death of Chatterton," by Wallis. The self-destroyed young poet, lying on a couch in his garret, and clothed in a silk suit, remained there for six months in his alluring ghastliness, attracting thousands of morbid eyes day after day. There was also an imposing picture of fruit by Snyder, from whence the mothers had a difficulty in removing their children. The strawberries appearing so inviting and real, as surely as a child appeared before that fruit piece so sure was there to be a howl of disappointment on leaving it.

I was impressed with the knowledge which I ever kept in mind of the rapidly-approaching close of the Exhibition, and in contemplation of it resolved to extend and systematize my visits, the more so that I was anxious that not a single work amongst the thousands being exhibited

should escape my criticizing eye. With this object in view I divided the building into sections, devoting each day some four hours to the careful inspection of each. The idea was well enough in theory, but impracticable. It was impossible to do even scant justice to any section in a few hours, say, for instance, of Turner's works of his middle and early middle period. Consequently the hours passed, and day after day found me in the same spot, absorbed in the contemplation of some of the great man's finest creations. Here were his early, carefully-made drawings without much colour, and also drawings made for the celebrated illustrations, and vignettes in profusion. The *Liber Studiorum* also were there—and so were his two latest works, executed when his mind wandered and his colouring became incoherent. These two drawings, "Lake of Lucerne" and "An Alpine Pass," showed that his sense of colour had given way, and they were designated respectively "Scarlet Fever" and "Yellow Fever." No man with the faintest love for art can fail to be inspired by Turner, if studied before the great painter reached his dotage. These two works were simply curiosities, and afforded pain rather than pleasure. Had Turner's works remained there twenty years, I suppose I should have continued during that time to satisfy the cravings for his art. The English School of Water-Colour Artists, which has no equal, was profusely represented. David Cox, P. de Wint, Samuel Prout, Copley Fielding, George Barrett, George Cattermole, William Hunt, John Varley, Havill, Cristall, Dayes, and Girtin, all culminated there. It was, however, necessary to act

on some principle of divided attentions to prevent an oversight.

In one of the vestibules I frequently found myself surrounded almost exclusively by the works of Murillo and Hobbima. The galleries and vestibules were filled with the works of modern artists and ancient masters. The works of Titian, Paul Veronese, Velasquez, Rembrandt, Rubens, became as familiar as the Mulready's, Websters, David Wilkies, and Ettys. Living portraits looked down upon you, go where you would. I passed by the forests of statuary, of which there appeared no end, as I did the exquisitely-carved and inlaid furniture, rich cabinets inlaid with coloured woods, ivory, and precious stones, or delicately-painted medallions of porcelain. There was the buhl cabinet which had belonged to Cardinal de Retz, now the property of the Queen; Venetian glass of various kinds with wonderful effects; enamels, showing the whole history of the art; cases filled with porcelain specimens of Majolica, Pallisy, Chinese, Persian, Dresden, Chelsea, Wedgwood, Sevres, and of every other country and manufacture; cases filled with glittering treasures of the goldsmith's art, ancient and modern, and of immense value. Sir David Wilkie was well seen, and Sir Edwin Landseer could be contemplated to perfection. There were the finest oil paintings by Creswick I have seen, before or since. Millais's "Autumn Leaves" left a lively impression. I hear it looks as bright and beautiful now in the Manchester Corporation Autumn Exhibition as it did in the Art Treasures in 1857.

CHAPTER XI.

A CRISIS IN TRADE—ART PURCHASES.

FOR many years I had known Mr. Frederick Moregood.* He was well known in business circles in Manchester, and especially on the Exchange, where his large transactions were often a topic of conversation, not unmixed with astonishment. Our intimacy had not been very close, but when we frequently met, his kind, frank manner had a charm for me, as doubtless it had for others. Were he absent during the hour of "High 'Change" I missed the commanding figure and cordial grip of the hand. Whether he expressed his views on things in general or Charles Halle's concert of the previous night—for he was very musical—or my own personal affairs in particular—for he took an interest in them—he always commanded my attention.

On several occasions he expressed dissatisfaction with the line of business I was following, and urged that it did not afford scope enough for my energies, and that my talents should find a wider field of operation.

I met him one day on the Exchange; he had been looking for me. He knew a manufacturer, advanced in years, whose partner had recently died. Mr. Moregood, who knew everybody, was asked if he could find the old gentleman another partner, young, active, and competent; failing

which he should retire from business. Now, said Mr. Moregood, with his happy twinkle of the eye, you answer all his requirements. I recommend you to see him at once. His name is Tumbleton*, and you will find him at his mill. In an hour afterwards I was deep in conversation with the proprietor, in his little office, in a weaving mill in one of the least attractive of the Manchester suburbs. On my entrance I found him engaged in writing what I thought was a sermon, which he afterwards put into a drawer. After introducing myself, he asked me abruptly what I wanted, probably fearing I had called to solicit a subscription for some charity. On my explaining the object of my visit, a look of intense earnestness overspread his countenance in place of the deprecatory one which had preceded it. When I mentioned the person who had sent me to him his manner became much less brusque. Probably he saw in the stranger the future young partner he required.

I felt I had a character before me. I always gave a preference to individuality of character, and had a natural aversion to human insipidity and milk and water. I do not say this particular character much charmed me—on the contrary, his churlish manner before he knew the object of my visit revolted me somewhat; and yet he had a certain attraction in his bluntness.

After confirming Mr. Moregood's statement respecting the decease of his late partner, and the interchange of a few questions, we parted. During my interview I discovered that the mill was an old one, and that the looms therein had seen their best

days. The proprietor impressively informed me he was in possession of an income sufficient for his family requirements; that he had no children to provide for, and was therefore indifferent in the matter of either remaining in or retiring from business. My introduction to him, however, had kindled new emotions when he arranged to call upon me. The next day I received his visit, which he utilized in the close inspection of my little clerk and the establishment generally, ending with an invitation to take tea with him on the following day. The next day was the one on which the Exhibition was to close, and the prospect of the dispersion of the collection disquieted me. I had been a constant visitor to the Exhibition, and had experienced with much delight its educating influence. I had there unexpectedly met friends from the West of England who had been attracted thither by the love for the beautiful. There I had been introduced to the lady who was soon to become the handsome wife of William Renshaw. She was musical, and had made intelligent remarks on some of the pictures and also of the music of the orchestra. I had eagerly chaperoned, from time to time, the youthful and middle-aged of the fair sex, who allowed themselves to be conducted to those objects which I considered the most interesting, being satisfied the time would thus be judiciously occupied; and never was there a greater sufferer than myself from pictorial *embarras de richesse*. I had sat for hours there with J. S. Baring, of London, and talked over the prospects of our respective future lives. I had there listened to much music which I had never previously heard,

and which to this day I associate with that time. I became sadly conscious of the fact that "all things to their period tend."

My visit to the house of Mr. Tumbleton was made. I was introduced to his wife, and elderly maiden sister, and also his niece, who resided with them. I became confirmed in my opinion that the old gentleman had struck out ideas of renewed business life, and that he had no intention of carrying his contemplated retirement into effect. He was cheerful, and altogether more sociable than on our first interview. On this occasion I discovered I was correct in supposing he was writing a sermon at his mill on my appearance there, for he now informed me he was not only a theologian but also a preacher. This announcement gave rise to mixed feelings as I walked home that night, but I was more concerned that the Fine Art Treasures Exhibition had become a thing of the past.

During the few succeeding days I heard from various sources of the anxiety with which Mr. Tumbleton had canvassed me amongst those who were able to supply him with all the information he required of me before concluding our final arrangement.

Mr. Thornton's affairs at this time were approaching a crisis. His latest balance-sheet showed so disastrous a result that he urged me to go over to the mill to assist him in investigating his affairs. On the following day I had a heavy time with him, being for many hours absorbed in his books, and working indefatigably. At the conclusion I felt quite satisfied what course I should urge for

his adoption. What was it? To cease buying another pound of cotton. To work up all the cotton on hand. To discharge the workpeople. To sell the machinery, close the mill, make' some kind of a compromise with the landlord for the annulling of the unexpired portion of his lease, and then, clear out!

The wretched balance-sheet was studied again and again and again, with microscopic care and attention, in the hope of detecting some clerical error. It too faithfully revealed the true state of affairs, and demanded the remedy described as above, which was the only one that could rescue the remnant of a fortune which had been frittered away. He was reluctant to act on my advice; but, as I was backed by his wife, I assumed an authoritative manner, and in a week the mill was closed, the cotton having been worked up, and the hands dismissed. The machinery was also advertised for sale. It sold well, and Mr. Thornton, for the first time since I had known him, was in possession of ready funds, but they barely reached in amount an eighth of the fortune he had invested in the old mill.

A week or two only elapsed from the day of the sale when one of those crises which seemed to recur every ten years took place—the crisis of 1857. It was sharp whilst it lasted for some three months. The whole course of trade in Lancashire has now become changed, and instead of the crises coming round every decade of years they seem to last that time. As far as I can learn, that of 1877 still drags with its desolating effects. Mr. Thornton warmly acknowledged the

prompt decision I exercised, and which led to the immediate closing of his mill. Had it not been effected at once the remnant of his fortune would have been completely absorbed in the widespread depreciation which immediately followed.

One of my first introductions in Manchester was to Mr. John Rareworthy,^x who kept an art establishment in the Oxford Road. For this privilege I was indebted to my old acquaintance Mr. E. Phelps, the happy possessor of the fine old Woollett and Morghen line engravings. Wishing to make my change of residence to Manchester as congenial as it could be, he conducted me in triumph to the chief source of his own valuable acquisitions; and I formed a friendship with one of the best and gentlest of men which lasted 32 years, and has only terminated with his removal from the turmoils of the present life. In those days expensive works of art were not within my reach, but to collect choice prints of fine quality was one of the keenest pursuits of my leisure moments. In the pictorial establishment of my newly-formed acquaintance I found daily delight, and in turning over numerous folios frequently secured a valuable specimen. The attraction to his rooms was like that of the hart to the water-brook.

Mr. Rareworthy was a man who had a discriminating love of the beautiful, whether in art or literature. He was engaged in a business which from one of its aspects was consonant with his nature. His happiness was to foster in the minds of others the same true love of art which he himself possessed, and this he accomplished without

^x Rowbotham.

much regard to pecuniary considerations. His abnegation of self, which I often thought to be excessive, soon became obvious to his visitors. It is no wonder that in the presence of such a spirit and surroundings I passed every hour I could occasionally steal from the prosaic duties of everyday life. My friend frequently changed his place of business, but wherever he went thither I followed him, with undeviating interest and increased pleasure. To know him was indeed a privilege. Whatever weakness might be consciously or unconsciously revealed in the desire to become possessed of some good thing in art, no advantage was ever taken of the revelation ; but, on the contrary, facilities were afforded to enable you to become the possessor of the coveted work. The result of my regular visits was, I had access to information and other privileges which were of great value.

I was duly informed when art sales were to be attended, and the probability was that I should have the first glimpse of any purchases made. I remember his unfolding a parcel containing sixteen sketches, which he had bought on the previous day at a sale of Ackermann's. They were the original designs by Rowlandson, illustrating *The Tour of Dr. Syntax*. They were not mounted, and appeared to lack importance. My good friend thought I would like them, and sold me the sixteen drawings for ten shillings. Had they been nicely mounted he might have obtained two pounds each for them, a sum for which I sold them after keeping them for a quarter of a century in a folio. On another occa-

sion he sold me for twenty pounds a leaf folio, containing some thirty plates of Sir Joshua Reynolds's works in all states, some being worn, lettered prints, though in good preservation ; many others, however, were proofs before letters, and some of these the full-length favourites. I kept these for very many years, giving my doctor one or more at the birth of each of my children, and selling others at prices out of all proportion to that at which they were purchased. From Mr. Rareworthy I bought the first David Cox drawing I ever possessed, of course for a small sum. I paid him three pounds for it, and kept it for nearly thirty years. The subject was called "Rowsley," but I never was able to discover from what point of the village it was taken, though on all occasions of a visit to Rowsley I never failed to scour the neighbourhood in the hope of alighting on the actual scene, and I would have given much to have succeeded in my hunt. The colour of the drawing was confined to green and grey, with only an indication of blue sky. There was a cottage, having an open lattice window, with the shadow dexterously thrown on the other side, facing the spectator, and between him and it the gable end of another house appeared, the whole being canopied with a chestnut tree, the shadow of which also fell with lovely effect on the white-washed wall of the house. The laneway which passed the garden gate came to an abrupt bend, and would conduct a pedestrian right round the cottage. There was no figure in the drawing, nor any attempt at atmospheric effect. It belonged to the late middle period ; the handling being

unusually vigorous even for David Cox, and it was pronounced by connoisseurs to be a masterly production. Since then I have paid large sums for highly-finished works by the same artist, but no one of them has given me more intense gratification than the "Rowsley" sketch.

The visits of Mr. Tumbleton to my office became frequent. He made a daily appearance, urging me to close the place and repair to his mill at an early date. In vain I urged that to do so would be prejudicial to the interests of my clients, and that time was needed. I afterwards found he was keen on making a visit to the Hydropathic Establishment kept by the late Doctor Grindrod at Malvern, and this could not be accomplished until my installation. Mr. Thornton came to the rescue, and relieved me by taking the whole of my little establishment off my hands, and then began a fresh chapter in my Manchester life.

CHAPTER XII.

PARTNERSHIP WITH A MANUFACTURER—AN ANCOATS MILL.

THE commercial crisis of 1857 was attended with much inconvenience during the time I was adapting myself to my new sphere. The change was great from being amongst business men all the morning to finding myself in an office about ten feet square, sitting vis-a-vis with an old gentleman who watched every movement I made with much earnestness and attention. This kind of thing did not last long, for shortly afterwards he absented himself for many weeks. Before the contemplated visit to the Hydropathic Establishment could take place there were many things to be done, the most important being that of my introduction to the firms with whom in future I should have to transact our business. This was an interesting process, and occupied a considerable time in its accomplishment, and took place on the Exchange.

The Lancashire men of business are proverbially unartificial and plain-spoken. Notwithstanding this characteristic, and the absorbing thought required in some of their weighty transactions, many were the jokes and home-thrusts made on that occasion. The introductions were attended by congratulations from some and warnings from others, but more or less with jokes from all ; and

Mr. Tumbleton, too, seemed to be a lover of a joke. The remembrance of one introduction remains. It was made to a man who had passed the middle period of life. He had a gentlemanly exterior, with corresponding manners. When I was presented to him he seemed in marked contrast to the others. The easy and graceful movement he made when offering me his hand and expressing his best wishes for my welfare formed such a contrast as to live in one's memory. Our workpeople were a heterogeneous body, differing greatly from those of Mr. Thornton; lacking their simplicity and quiet manner. The building of the mill was unsuitable for its object. It consisted of four stories and an attic. It contained 408 looms, and there were upwards of a hundred of them placed on each floor. Looms should be worked only in sheds of not more than one story. When so arranged vibration is avoided. In our place, with four floors of looms, comprising one hundred in each, the vibration can be imagined. So great was it, there was once an alarm that the building was going to collapse, and the workpeople rushed frantically into the street in a state of panic. For a time engineers and millwrights were puzzled how to prevent a disaster. The only remedy that could be devised was found in bolting the walls with iron rods, running diagonally from the top through to the bottom of the building, clenching the beams of the floors in their passage, and holding the structure as compact as it was possible. Notwithstanding all this precaution, the vibrations could be only partially reduced, and the mill continued to rock

considerably. Sometimes a visitor would ascend to the top of the staircase, where, immediately overhead, was a cold water cistern, for the purpose of trying the effect. No one ever remained there more than a minute to my knowledge. The sensation produced by the "rocking" caused some persons to become giddy, but filled most of them with fright, and compelled the speedy retreat of all. We had a beam engine of Fairbairn's manufacture, the first made of its kind, the steam being cut off with tappet valves and revolving discs. A mortice-wheel geared into the fly-wheel, and drove an upright shaft, which extended from the first floor to the top of the mill, driving the looms and beaming frames. We had neither a warehouse nor an office in the city, and as the mill was inconveniently situated, customers rarely paid us a visit. They had to be seen at their warehouses or else on the Exchange.

The ill effects of the crisis passed over, followed by the usual increase of activity, and I had become sufficiently master of the situation for the Malvern hydropathic business to come off. A visit also to Blackpool was made, and on its termination the much talked of expedition to Malvern took place.

During Mr. Tumbleton's absence, which continued for three months, I received a large number of letters from him. They contained graphic and enthusiastic accounts of the water achievements as prescribed in the establishment where he was staying. He described the cold bath which he took every morning at seven o'clock, and sometimes earlier; also the walk of three-quarters of an hour's duration before taking his breakfast.

Then the breakfast itself, which was succeeded by a warm bath of 100 degrees of heat, followed by buckets of cold water, which were thrown upon the patient, producing a "grand effect," and ending at half-past five in the evening with a "cold dripping sheet."

This was one of the bills of fare, which varied daily. Then there were the highly-edifying lectures given by the Doctor on that much-neglected portion of the human system the skin, and also of many more of the vital organs. The visitors, who were chiefly clerical, were described as being very intelligent and agreeable. Amongst them was a reverend Canon, who lost no opportunity of expressing his admiration for Manchester, and his appreciation of the mental and physical energy of its citizens.

Although he gave indications of a desire to return and witness the progress of events connected with the new firm, yet in contemplation of the extraordinary vigour which had been imparted to him, and of which he hoped for augmented supplies, under the influence of packings, perspirings, immersions, and douchings of daily occurrence, he apologetically confessed his inability to leave Malvern for the present. Moreover, he was now enjoying better health than he had experienced for eight years. I required his presence in view of important and necessary changes in the mill. There was nothing for it, however, but to let them remain in abeyance until the hot and cold water had fully accomplished their purpose, and I wrote to him not to hasten his return.

In the course of business I had occasion to call at the extensive mill owned by the gentleman who had impressed me with his graceful greeting on the Exchange, and was received by him with the same courtly manner. He introduced me to his oldest son, who had recently returned from Germany, where he completed his education, and was now engaged in cotton with his sire. He was rather good-looking and showed the effect of Continental drill in his erect figure. I thought him somewhat brusque in manner, and lacking the grace and ease of his father, though he favourably impressed me. At my next meeting on the Exchange, with the father, we conversed on matters other than the everlasting cotton. Music was the chief topic, and he told me his son was an enthusiast, and performed both on organ and pianoforte. Moreover I was told that my own love for the Divine Art would doubtless have such a cementing influence as to give the new firm many an advantage which otherwise would not be accorded to it. The pleasant effect produced by this unexpected announcement was only modified by the remembrance that my new partner knew or cared no more for music than a cow does of or for a mince pie, though he would be a participator in the advantage I was to enjoy.

Not long after this, the father with his son, who became my *Fidus Achates*, honoured me with their presence at my lodgings, and we devoted much of the evening to the discussion of musical subjects. A return visit was made to their house, and a friendship began, ending on the part of the father only with his lamentable death. He was

taken away far too early for those who, like myself, could discern the nobility of his nature. For years I sadly missed his presence in the daily throng assembled on the Exchange. Though now finally separated from Manchester and all of those whom I once knew and cared for there, the son of my honoured friend remains faithful to me, being one of the few who recalls by his intercourse the pleasant memories of the past.

On the 19th March, 1858, Mr. Thornton executed a deed wherein he "nominated, constituted, and appointed me in his place and stead, and deputed me, my executors and administrators, his true and lawful attorney and attorneys," and shortly afterwards sailed for Dunedin in New Zealand. He had for some time contemplated a visit to one of the colonies, to examine its resources with the object of providing a future home for his family, and would have made it earlier if I would have consented to accompany him. My mother expressed herself so decidedly hostile to such a proceeding on my part that the subject could not be broached a second time, and my good, worthy friend and "governor" made the voyage alone.

I took leave of him with some emotion at the London Road Station. On the platform he met Mr. George Wilson (the famous chairman), who said to him, "Where are you going, John?" and received for reply, "To New Zealand;" which caused that gentleman to open his eye in amazement. As far as I remember, they travelled together in the same carriage. After his departure I began to be impressed with a feeling of the

responsibility that had devolved upon me. I had been sufficiently at his house and at his side to be well acquainted with his affairs, though I contemplated some trouble in one or two quarters. These latter considerations however I laid aside in recognizing that "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Nevertheless in later months my time was most inconveniently absorbed in matters relating to the trust, so much so, I regretted there had not been some other individual found who might have been "nominated constituted, and appointed" instead of myself.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEW FRIENDS.

I WAS a frequent visitor at the house of Mrs. Alison,^x a widow lady, living in a handsome detached residence in one of the suburbs. I first knew her in her husband's lifetime. He was one of Mr. Thornton's intimate friends, and at his house I made their acquaintance. Mr. Alison was a retired merchant. He possessed literary taste and a cultivated mind; moreover, he had an ample fortune, kept almost an open house, and received his visitors with hospitality. In my early days he gave me considerate attention, and would frequently call at the governor's warehouse to invite me to dance or dinner party, or "music and muffins," as the case may be. Mr. Alison had a smart, active personal appearance. His figure was slight, and he dressed well. His hair was white, but abundant, with none on the face or chin. He had sharp features, a massive forehead, and a fine eye. I was always glad to behold him, for he was not only a pleasant subject for the eye to rest on, but I knew him to be good-hearted, though sarcasm more frequently than smiles were detected on his countenance; but I knew he was true to me. When he frequently called at my own office in after years, he would enter it in a manner so lordly and autocratic that it disconcerted me not a little if a client happened to be engaged with me when he

made his appearance. My friend was impatient, and required immediate attention, no matter who was present. It required all my tact and skill to prevent offence to the customer on the one hand, and irritation to my inconsiderate old friend on the other. Notwithstanding his genuine hospitality, he sometimes shocked his friends. He had no children, no occupation, but much wealth. It was not surprising, therefore, he should indulge in some whims and fancies. He was justly proud of his wines, and of this fact no frequent visitor to his house could long remain in ignorance; but how on earth were people to know he had the same weakness for mustard? But so it was. I joined him one night at supper in a Welsh "rarebit," and at the end of the feast a portion of mustard remained on my plate. His quick eye detected my delinquency, and he exclaimed with the utmost gravity, bordering on severity, "Perhaps, sir, you are not aware the mustard you have left to waste on your plate is the finest mustard manufactured in Durham, from whence I have it regularly sent me every month from the factory." I was conscience-stricken and penitent, but escaped further reproaches by explaining to him that I had put on my plate the exact quantity of mustard and no more which accorded with my usual consuming capacity. His mustard, however, possessed double the strength and virtue of any mustard I had before tasted, but of this fact I was not previously aware, and an inspection of the quantity of the unconsumed condiment left on my plate would convince him of the correctness of my conduct in the matter. He considered I had made

so good an *a priori* case that he condoned my offence. On another occasion a different case of victimization occurred. In this instance, a young friend was taking some of his rare port wine with him. After filling his glass, he drank the wine off with an expressive smack of the lips. "Do you know sir," said Mr. A. "you have just swallowed two shillings and sixpence?" The guest on this occasion, knowing that he had the best of it, remarked that the quality of the liquor was so fine that when the delicious fluid began flowing, it was impossible to stop its course until the whole had disappeared.

"A pipe! It is a great soother! a pleasant comforter! Blue devils fly before its honest breath! It ripens the brain, it opens the heart, and the man who smokes thinks like a sage and acts like a Samaritan." The repetition of the foregoing sentiments, which were those of no less distinguished a man than Sir Bulwer Lytton, formed my reply to Mr. Alison when he expressed opinions very hostile to the use of tobacco. When it became known to him I had quoted from so high an authority his views on the subject became modified. On my next visit to his house I was not a little surprised when the servant appeared with a tray containing two exquisite "London straws" and a packet of tobacco, together with spells and an ash-holder. Sir Bulwer had made an impression, and my friend had begun to "think as a sage and act like a Samaritan" already. The pipes were attractive, and the tobacco excellent, and we were soon engaged in our respective fumous operations. But my old friend was a

neophyte. It was, I think, his first attempt, and somehow he did not take kindly to it. The tobacco was Latakia, of delicate flavour, but he thought it could not be very good. I assured him it was excellent. He considered it was too strong; but, on the contrary, I told him it was very mild. His pipe, he thought, did not draw properly, so he pulled at it with such vehemence that more smoke than was necessary was inhaled; but inasmuch as exhalations did not follow at the right moment, a fit of coughing ensued, resulting in the pipe being laid aside, and a gasping for breath on the part of the smoker, which was not pleasant to contemplate. There were no more pipes introduced after this well-intentioned though unsuccessful effort, and my old friend relapsed into his former adverse views, irrespective of Sir Bulwer Lytton. He passed away in a few years, and I mourned his loss, but his friendship will always remain in grateful remembrance. His widow was true to his memory, and, as the young friend of her late husband, I became, more than formerly, a constant visitor at her house, where I met many persons from time to time, and some of them so frequently that intimate acquaintances were formed and friendships perpetuated.

John Brindlebury^x was one of the choice spirits who were frequently allured to my rooms. His visits were welcome ones, and in early days were frequent. He was a civil engineer, and the son of a Manchester physician, who died early, falling a victim to the disease with which he was battling on behalf of others. John's mother thought it would be a fine thing to make a rich Manchester

^x Pendlebury

merchant of him, and with that well-intentioned object apprenticed him to a leading firm for five years. She paid the firm a handsome premium, doubtless thinking that in after years it would prove to have been a fine investment; for would not her boy become acquainted with all the elements of success that are to be found in those princely warehouses, and in the fullness of time become the proprietor of one of the commercial mansions himself. John desired to comply with his parent's wishes, and to fulfil all her aspirations if it were possible. With these good intentions he donned the mercantile harness and put his shoulder literally and figuratively to the wheel. He conscientiously applied himself to the discharge of every duty that was imposed upon him, and for some months each day was spent in the customary manner, of carrying on his shoulders the heavy bales of white calico as they were delivered by the bleacher's lurry. These weighty bundles had to be piled away in the uppermost room of a five-storied building. As there was no hoist, they must find their way thither on the shoulders of the youngest articulated apprentice. My friend occupied this distinguished position in the house, and discharged the functions pertaining thereto as long as he could. The time arrived when overtaxed nature refused any longer to be overtaxed, and the willing victim broke down. When other and less laborious occupation was requested and refused, the rebellious spirit of opposition was aroused, and even a mother's solicitude failed to detain John in that particular process of climbing to distinction. When I first knew him he had

the more congenial work for which he was best fitted. The construction of a bridge or a railway was more to his mind, and he left us to carry on his new calling in South America, India, and other parts of the world, with such brilliant success that I believe he has now retired from active life, and devotes his hours to art and the muses. It was well for him his back became unequal to the burden of the bale, or he might, if not still climbing to fortune by that method, have made a fortune and again lost it, as not a few of us have done in Manchester.

No young man could long occupy a prominent position in Cottonopolis without becoming known intimately, or otherwise, with John Volumnus.^x My knowledge of him began through a business transaction with his father. The old gentleman, who was a very mild-mannered man of the old school, and as John Volumnus would assert, "too good for this world," had been unsuccessful in the completion of the negotiation. So far the matter seemed to be at an end, when the enterprising and irresistible son appeared upon the scene, displaying that tact and determination in effecting a successful issue which has distinguished him in after life. He was a lively young fellow—tall, handsome, and brimful to overflowing of animal spirits. The business in question was that of an insurance on my life. His father's office declined the risk through the recommendation of the medical referee. I had only just recovered from my illness, and selected the wrong time apparently for life insurance. The son, nothing daunted,

^x John William MacLure M.P for Stretford.

insured me in another office, aided by the satisfactory examination by a more competent doctor, who informed the zealous young agent that I possessed "a splendid conformation."

Many a time, for years afterwards, has my progress in the street been arrested by a familiar voice on the other side of it, in stentorian tones, inquiring if the "splendid conformation" continued satisfactory. His sagacity and smartness were justified. For more than twenty-five years I have paid him annual premiums, a proceeding by the way of which I am now heartily tired. Doubtless mine was only one of a number of instances where similar difficulties were surmounted by similar adroitness.

A conspicuous member of my little coterie was a handsome young Irishman. It was when on a visit to my native city I first heard of this young aspirant to Manchester glory. I was asked to cultivate his acquaintance and extend to him a helping hand in the race to fortune. Eusebius x Pigott was then pursuing with avidity, in an office in the city, the duties pertaining to the sale of oil. The consumption of oil in Lancashire and Yorkshire is enormous, and although many substitutes have, from time to time, been introduced for economic objects, nothing as yet has supplanted its use.

A man who has an extensive oil business with cotton spinners and manufacturers may be regarded as one who is in a fair way to realize a large fortune, if he have not already done so. It was in the establishment of such a one that I first made myself known, according to promise, to my young Hibernian friend. I found him to be

x *Sir Eustace Piers. Bart*

all he had been described to me—bright, active, and intelligent. He appeared not more than eighteen years of age—he had an engaging manner—expressed himself delighted with the raid I had made upon him which resulted in his spending the whole of the following Sunday with me at my rooms. I asked him to come early, and by the time I had reached the breakfast room, my new acquaintance was at the door. It was a lovely summer morning. Not knowing how he would wish to spend his Sunday, I hinted to him I was in the habit myself of going to church; he informed me he did the same thing. Before we sat down to dinner that day we had a topic sufficient to occupy us to the exclusion of all others, had we been so minded.

At that time Puseyism had been making rapid strides in some of the Manchester churches. The newspapers teemed with letters of complaints from old parishioners of the innovations made in the services by young curates and rectors, but generally by the curates, who seemed to delight in shocking the susceptibilities of the old worshippers. The more moderate of the old High Church party, whilst standing aloof, looked grave and shook their heads, whilst the youthful of the extremes rubbed their hands with delight in the contemplation of the ever-increasing ceremonial adopted in some of the churches. My friend and I were not concerned about this subject on this occasion. We had attended our service. We had no intoning. We had heard “Jackson in F,” and the Psalms had been read and not sung; and we had also heard an extempore sermon on a text from the Romans—

and it was the sermon that caused our ceaseless prattle during the remainder of the afternoon. The young rector had but one object and one idea, and he could, of course, prove himself to be right from Scripture. The proofs were forthcoming in abundance, but how they could be enunciated and the enunciator not break his heart in enunciating them I could not understand; neither could my Irish friend, though he attempted some lame kind of apology for the enthusiastic preacher. The sermon which perturbed our youthful minds was delivered to show that the churches were generally in a bad way, especially in Manchester. Indeed, there was scarcely one of them where God's elect people could worship with comfort; and to make matters still worse, we were told that even in the church where we were assembled there were very few true worshippers. But, worst of all, the preacher averred that the elect were the only portion of the congregation to whom he was then preaching; all he had to tell the others being, that they had "no part or lot in the matter." In the evening, as we considered the parson had failed "rightly to divide the word" in the morning, we remained indoors, and I was favoured with my friend's views of things in general and Manchester in particular. He informed me he came to it in a thunderstorm, during the time of the Art Treasures Exhibition. He had seen and enjoyed the collection, but had never liked Manchester since, and considered he was not the right man in the right place.

Pigott was so satisfied with his first visit that he renewed it several times before the following

week had passed over. He had a little lodging of his own, very similar in its surroundings to that in which I passed my first few months in Manchester, though in his case he was not called upon by his landlady and her husband to adjust matrimonial differences. Our respective abodes, although a mile from each other, were not more than twelve minutes apart in point of time, the youthful Pierns being of a light build and a rapid walker ; so that when he returned from business to his empty room and found it uninviting, he easily transplanted himself to my more elaborate apartment, where he was sure of a welcome. He could have a book to read as long as he pleased (Macaulay's History, which had just appeared, was the favourite volume at that time), a game of chess, or hear a pianoforte performance of the "Dead March" in *Saul*, which greatly delighted him, and was, he thought, the finest composition ever written. He had it repeated so frequently that he would lose himself in abstraction, and on his return to consciousness would assert he had watched the last moments of the dying warrior, accompanying his body to its last resting-place, and in spirit followed him to the celestial city. Pigott had some pretty sentiments, but woe to the man who ventured upon a smile at them, for he was a true son of the soil, and as hot-tempered and quick to take offence as the average of his countrymen. On the whole, we got on fairly well together, for am I not half an Irishman myself? Moreover, his early struggles enlisted my warmest sympathy, for it was easy to see that in the absence of his acquaintance with any business or profession his life for some years

X

would probably be one of vicissitudes and disappointment, of which he afterwards had his share.

In time he began a career for himself. Pigott was well connected and of good family, and, moreover, he had brought some good introductions to Manchester friends, who were not directly connected with the Manchester industry, but they had not been of much service to him, and this circumstance was a cause of irritation and disappointment. For weeks and months and years I never lost an opportunity to introduce Eusebius to any commercial or professional friend whom I thought might be of service to him. He was so much at my rooms he soon knew all my visiting friends as well as I did myself, and I took him to the houses of not a few of my married acquaintances. W. Renshaw had for some time been a benedict, a householder, and a paterfamilias, and for a while nothing pleased him better than to entertain his bachelor friends, and so it came to pass that Eusebius was included in their number. The business he began was in conjunction with another aspirant to fortune, and an office was opened in a leading thoroughfare, though on the very highest story of the building, under the firm of "Harewood and Pigott," agents for the General Protection Fire and Life Assurance Society; capital incredible millions." Harewood was also a smart young fellow. His chief characteristic was the possession of an attractive voice, and although too stentorian for an evening party, yet in the matter of doing fire and life business nothing could be better adapted. He could go to the busiest of merchants at their busiest moments, and

X Harewood

when ordinary men would be shown the door, he, by the sheer quality of his deep and emphatic tones, would frequently come away with a valuable life or an important risk. Eusebius was indeed to be congratulated on having such a promising partner, whose eminent qualifications he did not fail to recognize. They worked actively and well together for a time. A larger office was required for their increasing business, which presently was so augmented as to justify a descent from the top story of the building. When I remember, at this distance of time, the numberless daily journeys made up and down those interminable stairs by those two young hopeful spirits, and think of the result as I see it now, of all their labours and aspirations, differing so widely from what was then contemplated by either of them, I am reminded of the mutability of all earthly affairs as well as the inexorable course of destiny.

CHAPTER XIV.

GOOD TRADE IN DOMESTICS—SOME LADY FRIENDS.

TUMBLETON returned from his three months' visit to the hydropathic establishment. I had been warned by those who knew him better than I did that he would come back with such increased powers of body and mind that our little office, the mill, even Manchester itself, would be too small for him. My surprise therefore was not a little on his reappearance at the office when I beheld him in all respects more quiet and dignified than I had yet seen him. His complexion had become clear, and he was reduced in size to almost elegant proportions, and he assured me the experience of the three previous months though he would not wish to repeat it, had been highly satisfactory.

I had read so much of the process in his letters that I dreaded a *viva voce* repetition of it, and hastened from his presence with a sense of horror at the time before he would leave off describing and enlarging, if he once began the subject which was uppermost in his mind. He soon found listeners, patient or otherwise, to hearken to the recital of his late exploits in the baths, and for some months pack-sheets and douches were the theme of his conversation to the exclusion of looms and theology. His expression of pity for those who could not afford either time or money necessary for a similiar visit was only equalled

by his astonishment at the ignorance and prejudice of those who might, if they would, avail themselves of a like advantage. To my utter astonishment, and probably his own, very shortly after his return he was laid up with a severe cold, on his recovery from which hydropathy was less spoken of, and in time fell out of notice.

Our looms were very old ones, and according to the annual deduction for depreciation should have had only a nominal value when I joined Tumbleton. They were, however, taken at a pretty high valuation, which was all the worse for me and the better for Tumbleton. Notwithstanding their too high assessment they must inevitably come out and make place for others of more modern construction, otherwise we shall be out of the race. After the process of removing and replenishing, which occupied much time in its completion, we went ahead. Tumbleton and Co. (I was the Co.), were manufacturers of a cloth called by the name of Domestics by the trade. Our cloth was received with favour, and as competition was not severely keen we realized good prices and made fair profits. Up to the time of my joining the firm three varieties of cloth only had been made, and these had now fallen into neglect. It was needful, therefore, to start afresh with a somewhat new fabric, and one which was likely to be not only popular but remunerative. For this object it became necessary to discard many of the old spinners who supplied us, and to use yarns made by men of a higher class. All this was effected with good results, and an active and healthy business followed. For a time Tumbleton was

shocked with the innovations I had made, but he had the sagacity, whilst urging great caution, to abstain from any interference to which he was entitled, but wisely refrained from exercising. I never knew for what purpose our cloth, now in good demand, was applied. We supplied only the Manchester merchants, many of whom shipped them to Portugal, and others to the Brazils and South America. The home-trade houses, which took the largest quantity, supplied them to London and provincial wholesale houses, whilst a few Irishmen from Dublin and Cork came over periodically and bought from us by stealth, for the Manchester firms displayed a vast amount of zeal in their efforts to exclude those outside of the city from buying direct from the maker. I once found myself in hot collision with our chief customer on this subject.

I met an old Bristol friend in the city. He was one of those merchants from whom I had vainly solicited business for dear old John Thornton in the early days. I had made a customer of him at last, and he regularly called upon me when he visited Manchester. When I had told him all about the new firm and our progress he requested to be supplied with a few bales of our goods, and business ensued for a time until it became known by an accident that we were supplying an outsider. The secret would have been kept for some time longer but for an inquisitive youth who had been sent by his employer to our office to inquire after goods. He saw an addressed empty envelope on the desk, the handwriting on which he recognized as that of my old friend, and informed his

master of the circumstance. This gentleman at our next interview threatened me with his dire vengeance unless I closed the account immediately. It had to be closed accordingly, but I ever regarded the act as a mean operation of which I was heartily ashamed.

Tumbleton was happy. In the matter of business he had little to do ; indeed, he had a time of leisure never before known to him, and he availed himself of all the advantages it afforded. He re-visited Blackpool, making prolonged stays at his favourite hotel. He occasionally preached a sermon in some benighted outskirt of the city, and now and then he ventured to expound in the city itself. He attended any lecture he could hear on hygienic subjects, and especially any dealing with the human epidermis from a hydropathist's point of view, as also an occasional philosophical investigation of the atmosphere. These were subjects of which he never wearied, and yet, so strange and inexplicable is human inconsistency, he never took a morning bath when away from the "establishment," and seemed to delight in the atmosphere of a room with windows closed, unventilated, and wherein few besides himself could breathe with any comfort. He made also long visits to Bakewell, Buxton, and other parts of Derbyshire ; and at Matlock he made the discovery of another hydropathic establishment from which he thought he might derive yet more advantage than that in Malvern.

But presently he felt the want of occupation. I had left him nothing to do ; moreover I had considerably increased his income. He began to

think that the old house in which he had resided for so many years hardly accorded with the dignity of one who was at the head of our distinguished firm. The discovery of this incongruity resulted in his bidding adieu to the old home with all its associations; selling by auction the old-fashioned furniture, notwithstanding it had answered its purpose "well enough for him;" but it was neither modern nor in keeping with the imposing residence on which he had fixed his heart, and so everything was disposed of and the new dwelling provided with furniture and fittings to correspond with its owner's improved ideas. On my last visit to him at the old domicile, I suggested the sense of sadness with which he might be reasonably impressed, in the contemplation of leaving what had been his home for so many years. To my surprise he was seriously affected by my remark, and observed with some pathos, the circumstance, which he could not dismiss from his mind, of the many blessings of health and prosperity he had enjoyed there. He seemed to be conscious of having exposed himself to the charge of ambition, which he not only deprecated, but he also expressed sorrow at leaving the old home, and no pleasure in the prospect of entering the new one. "I know," said he, "what I have passed through in this house, but how can I tell what is before me in the other?" Any person might make a similar remark without eliciting a contradiction, but he evidently had some misgivings as to the future of his household.

Mr. Tumbleton had not been installed many months in his handsome newly-furnished residence

(I do not think he had been there a year—I write from memory) before he was overtaken with a great domestic bereavement. Mrs. Tumbleton died somewhat suddenly. The shock was trying to him, but he bore up bravely. His wife was an amiable woman, but lacking the individuality of character in which her husband abounded. I never gathered from her conversation that after their removal to the new residence her happiness was increased in proportion to the additional responsibility attendant upon the necessity of three or four servants, when formerly one only was required.

Amongst the many friendships formed at the house of Mrs. Alison, those of three especially retain a firm hold on my memory. Two of Mrs. Alison's intimate friends were sisters and widowed ladies; they lived together in a pretty house not more than ten minutes' walk from my room. Mrs. Cowper,^x the elder of the two, and Mrs. Alison, had been schoolfellows when they were children, and as each of them was not far distant from the span of "threescore years and ten," their friendship must have been of an enduring kind.

x ^x Mrs. Gower, the younger sister, was many years her junior. When I first knew them, Mrs. Airlie, ^{xxy} their mamma, was alive, and resided with her two daughters; and at this period she had reached her eighty-third year, and with her faculties unimpaired. She was a majestic old lady, and always received me as an empress might welcome a friend. How I enjoyed, after the day's turmoil, to find myself knocking at the door of their hospitable

^x Cooper xx Gore xxx Allen

establishment, which was generally opened to me by an old man-servant, who was somewhat younger than his aged mistress. He had then, he told me, been in her service for fifty years, and of course would remain in it whilst life lasted. "Would I come in? 'The young ladies' and the mistress are all at home."

The family had been in affluent circumstances, but I did not know them in those better days. I was pleased to know them now. I generally found them in the same room; mamma sitting in her high-backed chair, with her inevitable book, which was generally the latest novel. The calmness and serenity of the room depended on the absence or otherwise of the younger sister, for she was the active and demonstrative member of the household; whilst Mrs. Cowper was quiet and reflective, and guided all with her rare judgment and intelligence. The welcome was equal from the three, though manifested in accordance with their separate natures. The fine old lady's grasp of the hand, which I regarded as equivalent to being raised to the peerage, was not more grateful to me than Mrs. Cowper's quiet but unmistakable warmth, or Mrs. Gower's more demonstrative greeting. After my admission to this little circle, it is not a matter for astonishment that my bachelor apartments, with its pleasant surroundings, became somewhat neglected.

Mrs. Cowper was exceptionally accomplished and clever. There was scarcely a subject upon which she could not give an intelligent opinion—indeed, so varied was her knowledge that young folks regarded her as a locomotive encyclopædia, and as

such she was frequently resorted to for information upon almost every conceivable subject. For some years I found myself spending evenings twice or thrice weekly in the atmosphere of the unique little circle, when very unexpectedly our hearts were wellnigh broken by a sudden and alarming illness with which Mrs. Cowper was overtaken. On my morning walk to the house to make inquiry, I was met by Mr. Schwartz, a mutual friend, who was returning from a similar errand, and from him heard, in sobbing accents, the doctor had pronounced the fatal words, "No hope!" I hurried on, and found my dear friend lying on her couch, calm and sweet, notwithstanding the intense suffering through which she had passed the previous night, but which had now ceased. Her aged mother was sitting by her side, waiting, in dignified submission, the dreaded result, whilst active Mrs. Gower, with swollen eyes and haggard face, through constant watching, was busily engaged in such duties as the occasion necessitated, and waiting for the worst. Mrs. Cowper affectionately embraced me in their presence, and spoke in welcome words of her approaching end. I blessed her, and bade her adieu. During the day I obtained no tidings of her condition. I had to spend the evening with the Tumbletons, who observed my depression, and on leaving them Mrs. T. told me to "keep up," and remarked that she had more than once known people to recover who had been "given up" by the doctor. It proved so in this instance. On calling at Mrs. Airlie's house late that evening, Mrs. Gower turned a day's sorrow into a night's joy by the wonderful news she gave me of her

sister, who had rallied, and Dr. W. had stated she would recover.

It was, indeed, a wonderful recovery, and the case received notice in an ensuing number of one of the medical journals. I hastened to carry the joyful news to another friend, who belonged to Mrs. Alison's favoured circle, and at whose house I had met him. X Robert Frere lived in the neighbourhood, and I was soon at his house. Robert was one of those warm-hearted men, with an admixture of Scotch and Irish blood flowing through his veins, whose acquaintance, when formed, one feels instinctively must last for all time. His wife, who had delicate health, was a ward of the late Mr. Alison, and in her sitting-room hung a portrait of the old gentleman, which was a speaking likeness, and had a life-like aspect—so much so that I thought it could not fail to have a regulating effect upon all her actions, had she been inclined to waywardness. She was delicate, however, and it was evident her life would not be an extended one. Nevertheless, she was so watched and nursed and cared for by her husband's almost woman-like fidelity that her life was prolonged and her cheerfulness sustained to the last. My good news excited their liveliest interest, and the evening was spent in lauding and enumerating the many good qualities of the now convalescent patient. Mrs. Cowper's restoration was gradual and satisfactory. I spent an hour or two every available evening in her company, reading books and amusing her as I best could, in reciting to her the news and gossip of the day, and playing her favourite melodies on her old pianoforte. It was during

X Robert Fraser.

these occasions that the fine character she possessed impressed my mind. Her complete recovery was followed by the serious illness of her aged parent, whose loss we soon had to mourn. She departed at a greatly advanced age, with her faculties unclouded to the last. At the house of Robert, I met his wife's sister and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wentworth^x whose acquaintance was a feature in my Manchester existence. Whether in their own home, to which I frequently resorted, or that of their near relatives, where I often met them, I found them always the same—genial and true-hearted.

For many years I found a welcome at the house of either of the brothers-in-law, and at times I could have imagined myself to belong to them by nearer ties than friendship. Either of these two men I could almost bring myself to believe was my own brother, so open, so free, and well-intentioned was every incident that transpired between us during our long, uninterrupted friendship. Shall I ever meet the like again, now that I am in a strange and far-distant land? The answer is inevitable and unmistakable, Never! Of the long list of disappointments which greets one after bidding adieu to the native shores, which means bidding adieu to everything save memory, none exceeds that of the inability to replace one solitary friend. When Robert Frere, who was the earlier friend by a few days only, had experienced the bereavement which for a long time seemed inevitable, our friendship assumed a yet deeper form, which was manifested by a more frequent interchange of visits, though, as a rule, I was the

^x *Whilworth*.

visitor. His warehouse lay in my route from the mill to the Exchange, and I seldom or never passed it without showing him I was conscious of his whereabouts by making my appearance at his office door. Often at night, when about to retire, I have heard a tap at my window, when dear old Robert would present himself, with the request that I would un-slipper and re-boot myself, and, armed with weed and "churchwarden," accompany him to his solitary home. On such occasions I remained with him until long after the dawn of daylight, returning to my rooms when the mill chimneys, seen in the distance, were giving indication of preparations for the coming day.

It was not long before the surviving sister followed her relative, and my friend Wentworth, too, became a widower. His grief was quiet but intense, and the more so, as I think it was not apparent her end was so near. The sisters were not long undivided.

CHAPTER XV.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR AND THE COTTON FAMINE.

THE little mill prospered. During the operation of replacing the old looms with new ones, which was a slow and tedious process, many of our workpeople left us and did not return. It was a considerable time ere we were fairly afloat, but as the looms worked well and the yarn was good, a liberal "turn-off" of cloth resulted, and simultaneously our people were in receipt of better wages than they had hitherto known. The knowledge of this state of things soon became circulated, and resulted in weavers flocking to us from all quarters for employment. It was a glorious time. We had every loom running, a respectable body of satisfied weavers (numbering many "warblers") and overlookers; a production averaging fifteen tons of calico weekly from our four hundred and eight looms, and customers who took every yard as it was made. Mr. John Rathway, who was the head of the office and warehouse, and who had occupied an important and honoured position with our firm for many years, worked like a Trojan, revelling in the increased activity of the establishment. Had we continued much longer in this greed of production we must have ended in a smash of some kind. It generally happens that

such a combination of favourable circumstances as those enumerated is not of long continuance, and a "breakdown" of some kind occurs, either through a deficiency of the raw material, the fracture of a driving wheel or a boiler plate, or a fiasco by that *bete noir* of the manufacturer, the sizer, who too often works for present considerations apart from those of the future. We were affected by these troubles, more or less, which in their turn relieved the pressure of work. Had it been otherwise a greater mishap might have overtaken us in the breakdown of our old engine. It was found necessary to provide for an increase of motive power, which, when effected, enabled us once more to take Time by the forelock, and we went ahead, making cloth. Presently Lancashire began to look grave, and with good reason. Matters which would most certainly affect the price of cotton, assumed a serious form in America. There was intense excitement at Charleston and in the States, and by the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency. This was in 1860. On the 20th of December of the same year South Carolina seceded from the Union. The Civil War broke out in April, 1861.

There were many spinners, manufacturers, and merchants who thought the conflict would be of short duration, and that the South would be speedily subjugated by its more powerful Northern neighbour in its efforts for independence. The sincerity of such was made apparent in their refusal to secure increased supplies of the raw material whilst prices remained somewhat normal. When, before the year had closed, prices had

advanced considerably, the indisposition to lay in stocks increased yet more with many, and there being no corresponding advance in cloth, there was a resort to "short time," and eventually the closing of many mills followed. It was a time of perplexity, and demanded the utmost caution. When the cheap supplies were exhausted and it became necessary to replenish or "stand," one was confronted with such figures as had never before been associated with anything made of cotton. Before the end of 1862 our material had advanced three hundred per cent. To continue purchasing when such stupendous figures had been reached seemed contrary to reason and propriety. Through the stoppage of looms, however, cloth had become scarce, and rose greatly in value. There was, therefore, some justification for following the market. Moreover, there was a reaction in the public sentiment.

Many persons who at the commencement of the struggle expected that the Southern States would be promptly cudgelled into submission took extreme views in a contrary direction after the severe defeats sustained by the armies of the North. Mr. Gladstone, who at that time was Chancellor of the Exchequer, stated publicly that he could no longer shut his eyes to the fact that the Southern Confederacy had not only succeeded in forming an army and a navy but it had also established a government. This utterance was regarded by Northern and Southern sympathizers respectively with hope and fear that the Confederacy would be recognized by our Government. In consequence of this revulsion of views many of the previously

.

timid operators appeared upon the scene, and bought cotton for 2s. 3d. per pound which they had previously declined purchasing at 10d. As the demand for cloth had increased, and prices continued to advance through growing scarcity, the inducement to purchase the raw material in excess of immediate wants was sufficient to justify the course we pursued, the result being that on one occasion we made the unprecedented profit of 1s. per pound on a delivery of cloth. In August, 1864, we sold Domestics at 2s. 3d. per pound. This was the highest price we obtained for an article which in ordinary times sells for 7d. or 8d.

Tumbleton was generally opposed to purchases beyond immediate requirements. He was one of those who favoured the prospects of the North at the outset, but, like many others, transferred his allegiance to the South for the time being. We worked very little "short time" during the period of the American war, and never closed the mill entirely. Gradually, great distress spread itself over Lancashire as the mills closed, and the people suffered much in our own immediate neighbourhood. The enterprising and indefatigable rector of the parish inaugurated sewing classes and other organizations for the benefit of the daily-increasing numbers of those who were no longer in receipt of wages. It was during this critical time I made his acquaintance. Though an active man myself, I was impressed with his powers of toil and endurance. My work ceased at six o'clock, or earlier, every evening, but his exertions seemed to go on for ever. Night and day he went amongst the people, irrespective of

creed, alleviating distress. If the receipt of funds from outside channels was low he did not hesitate to draw upon his own resources. I was inspired by his zeal and animated by his example. Though I had started life on the principle of devoting a tenth portion of income to those who needed it, and fully carried out the observance, yet in the contemplation of a man who was parting with at least half of his revenue for charitable objects I felt how little I had done comparatively. The rector had no difficulty in enlisting and utilizing my services, such as they were, and from that time until the day when, through shattered health, he resigned the living, I was ever ready with my services of assistance in whatever form they were required by him. Previous to the cotton famine he formed a committee of influential persons for the object of erecting a commodious parish church. In this, as in other matters which he took in hand, he was successful. He raised the necessary funds, purchased the land, and at the time of the distress the architectural plans were under discussion. The parish was one of the largest in Manchester, containing, in those days, thirteen thousand persons, composed chiefly of workpeople.

My reverend friend deplored the indifference to the spiritual wants of the operatives on the part of many of the employers, who generally resided at a considerable distance from their works. Now that the physical wants of the people were pressing and widespread, he attacked the millowners, machinists, and the general public, vigorously and successfully, with the result that money flowed

into the exchequer, and was judiciously distributed and utilized. Often when his work lay in the neighbourhood of my office he would snatch a few minutes for a short rest, and tell me of some sad case just come under his notice, of poverty and want in a hitherto well-to-do household. At such times I have looked at him with love and admiration, whilst he has wiped the dust from his massive, intellectual brow. But even these five minutes must be turned to account. He is probably going to "address a few words" to a newly-formed sewing class of unemployed women, and wishes me to accompany him. I readily comply, and become a glad listener to the earnest words that are spoken to them. I never met him without delight, nor parted from him without regret. Although he had received a military education, and had served with distinction in the army, the beneficial results of his clerical labours will remain for all time; and for myself, the hours spent with him in parish work will ever be remembered as some of my happiest. He left us with the grief of a parent separating from a family; but he had an exalted opinion of the clergyman who would be his successor, and whom he described to me as a man after my own heart, and one who would continue the good work with much vigour and ability to which my friend was now unequal.

The period of the American war had been one of considerable prosperity to our firm, and Mr. Tumbleton was not slow to appreciate the benefits it had conferred upon it. He became liberal in the bestowal of large sums applicable to the building of churches for the religious body to

which he belonged. This was the principal channel for which his benevolence found an outlet that I could ever discover. The result of his beneficence was a collection of silver trowels with ivory handles, numbering something like a dozen, and each one commemorative of his act in laying a foundation stone. It certainly was a unique collection. It formed an attractive feature in his dining-room, and he doubtless frequently contemplated it with complacency. On one occasion, when he gave a supper party at his house, which included a large number of ministers, this collection became the object of general attention. They reposed side by side in all their lustre and suggestiveness on the well-polished mahogany sideboard, and around them were gathered the reverend gentlemen present, who naturally, especially the more youthful of them, regarded the display with admiring eyes. Many were the congratulations and complimentary remarks passed upon Mr. Tumbleton's devotion and liberality, each reverend gentleman having something to say in a neat concise manner eulogistic of the self-sacrifice and overflowing goodness which had resulted in deeds of which the elegant display before them was the expression.

When all had spoken but myself, it was expected I should say something. What could I say? What I did say was something like the following: "Gentlemen,—On behalf of our worthy host, who perhaps you are not aware is my partner in business, I thank you for your appreciation of these grateful tributes of his large-hearted and spirited acts of benevolence. I can only regret that whilst

receiving your homage, which he so justly deserves, my partner did not disclaim appropriating it entirely to himself, remembering as he does, that without the efforts put forth by the person now addressing you, this superb collection could not have existed in its present grandeur. The fact is, gentlemen, when I tell you it was I who provided the means, and our worthy friend who had their disposal, I think you will agree with me, that 'Tumbleton and Company' are the deserving parties."

The joke was an effective one. The old ministers held their sides to prevent dissolution whilst the younger ones, probably for the same object, though with less decorum, roared with laughter, and Tumbleton laughed the most of all. His health soon after began to give way. He came seldom to look at us at the mill, and I began to think the loss of his wife was telling upon him. I received a letter one morning in which he appointed a time for an interview: he had something to communicate. I found him weak and feeble, and he told me he had been suffering for some time, and feared he would not get better. His object in sending for me was to mention the altered state of health in which he found himself; and also to inform me of his intention to retire from business that I might provide another partner to take his place in the firm. After this unexpected announcement I lost no time in communicating with such persons whom I conceived eligible to replace my partner, but as capital would be required, in addition to manufacturing proclivities and capabilities, I failed in my efforts, and there remained only one

man who entertained my propositions. I had known him for many years in Mr. Thornton's mill, as a careful, industrious fellow, and for a time I hoped he would join me. He visited the mill, and gave anxious heed to its "rocking" propensities. He stood on the top of the staircase with fear and misgivings, and examined the rods and bolts with painful care and doubt. It was in vain I told him how well we were working, and what advantages we possessed, of our excellent weavers, of our popular makes of cloth, of our fine array of customers, and lastly of our large profits. These all fell idly upon him. He heard my words, but they were without effect. He could see only the mill rocking to and fro "like a ship," he thought, with the certainty it must be only a matter of time before it would tumble over. When I laid before him an array of quarterly balance sheets, the last four of which, in Tumbleton's own figures, showed the year's profits to have exceeded £8,000, in addition to interest on capital and allowance for depreciation on machinery, and told him of the probability of a continuance of similar prosperity, his manner changed, and now he regarded the subject so favourably as to say he would consult his "wife," and let me know the result. His wife had had little experience of "rocking," there being only one child, and he declined my offer. I regretted this decision. Had he joined me, our interests would have been equal, and he would have been a worker, whereas Tumbleton was receiving a disproportionately large share of the profits, and did no work. I could not help myself, however, and

failed to find another partner, and events went on as before.

Tumbleton visited his newly-discovered hydropathic establishment at Matlock, which accorded more with his views and feelings than that of Malvern, and the old love was forsaken for the new. He visited Blackpool also, long and frequently. The hotel there to which he resorted had evidently considerable attractions. It was a favourite place for well-to-do people from all parts of Lancashire, and he liked the society he met there. I saw very little of him now, and our communications were carried on by letter. Business continued more or less profitable, but attended with considerable excitement. When a great battle was fought between the contending armies in the States the price of cotton was seriously affected. In the event of a Northern success it frequently fell very considerably, the prospect of peace being supposed to be accelerated thereby. When a success of the Southern army was announced a contrary effect was produced, the prospect of peace being then considered more remote, as also a restoration of cotton cultivation. At one period, however, the reverse of this was the case, the opinion being firmly held by many that the Southern States would achieve their independence, and therefore a victory on the part of their armies indicated a nearer approach to peace, and consequently lower prices. The war, however, lasted between four and five years. When the supply from North America had nearly ceased, and there were only a few bales in Liverpool and very little known to be on the water,

we naturally looked to our Indian possessions, where there was a great increase in the cotton cultivation. Notwithstanding the aversion felt by the workpeople towards "Surat," the poor despised article was eagerly bought by spinners at fabulous prices for want of better material. At a prayer meeting held in one of the small Lancashire towns where the mills were well nigh all closed, and the people dependent on the welcome aid offered by the Cotton District Relief Fund, one of the members, in offering his petition, implored the Almighty, in pathetic accents, not to forsake the community, but that in His merciful providence He would grant that the people might be reinstated in their industry, and that He would in His good time supply them abundantly with the article upon which the success of the industry depended. Another member instantly took up the petition, and added with impressive earnestness, "But not Surat!" This incident spoke volumes for the low estimation in which that quality of cotton had been held.

It was hoped, in contemplation of the scarcity, that some substitutes could be provided, and jute and other fibres were frequently hailed as the coming article. Much dissatisfaction was manifested that the India dependencies did not improve the quality as well as the quantity of the coveted fibre, and much dissatisfaction also was expressed towards Sir Charles Wood, who was Secretary for India under Earl Russell's administration. Things became so bad, a deputation of Lancashire operatives waited on the Minister to represent their grievances. They afterwards paraded the streets

of the Metropolis with banners, on one of which was inscribed the following lines :—

They talk of substitutes for Cotton,
No substitutes are good—
The India Board is rotten ;
We want a substitute for *Wood* !

In the midst of his troubles the Lancashire man
abounds in wit and humour !

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD AND NEW ACQUAINTANCES—DISTRESS IN ANCOATS.

MR. THORNTON remained for three years in New Zealand, during which time a steady and regular correspondence ensued between us, and I duly advised him of all that came under my notice in which he and his family were concerned, and of the manner in which I was carrying out the trust. He spoke rapturously of Dunedin and the surrounding country, but there was no indication given in any of his letters of that success which would justify Mrs. Thornton in leaving England to join her husband. She waited, therefore, for improved accounts before committing herself and children to the serious changes involved in the breaking-up of a good home, with its genial surroundings, and entering upon the uncertainties, inconveniences, and privations which a person in her position has to suffer on emigrating to the Australian colonies. She therefore prudently awaited events, which culminated in the return of her husband. When Mr. Thornton and I again met he found me not only a benedict but a paterfamilias settled down to domestic life. Many were his congratulations and pleasantries on the changed state of my surroundings, and favourable comparisons with the old times,

when I could offer him only a lodging-house hospitality. His visits became frequent, the good man delighting to drop in upon us and relate his colonial experiences. Mr. Thornton's visit to New Zealand had the effect of giving vigour to his constitution, and he entirely lost a tendency to headache from which he previously suffered interminably. Beyond this advantage he appeared only to have wasted three years of his existence, in addition to the outlay he had incurred. The worst feature attendant upon his return was the difficulty, after so long an absence, of again falling into the groove and settling down to profitable employment. Though he was a man fertile in ideas and of great activity, Mr. Thornton never again took up the reins satisfactorily, and had to be contented with a moderate and uncertain business whilst devoting his increased leisure time to his love of reading and the pursuit of knowledge. When a man has withdrawn from the proprietorship of a mill he is seldom able to resume a position connected with cotton. Should the loss of capital be the cause of his withdrawal the amount required for renewed operations is generally too large to admit of its possibility. The probability is, he is too far advanced in years to take a managership, attend the market, or engage in the financing of another establishment; young men being generally sought for such positions, and are selected from the houses in which they are already engaged.

In such circumstances the business of insurance and transactions in oil are much resorted to—so much so, as to be spoken of as “a refuge for the

destitute." Fortunately, Mr. Thornton was not entirely dependent on his efforts, though he succeeded in working out a business ; and having the support of those who knew and cared for him, he settled down once more to Manchester life.

During these anxious years I found much advantage from intercourse with Mr. Morewood. He had been a successful operator during the ups and downs of those perilous times. It was pleasant to observe him as he might be leaving the Exchange, and perhaps in the act of restoring to his pocket his well-used order book ; and an agreeable and expressive twinkle of the eye would seem to indicate that the last hour had been satisfactorily occupied. His habit was to think well and deeply what he was going to do before mixing in the busy throng. By this simple process he could act on decisions previously formed ; and when surrounded by ardent buyers and sellers could also post through a large amount of business in the calmest manner. On one occasion he greeted me in his well-known manner, accompanied by the inquiry if there was " anything new," and on my replying to him that he was the man who was supposed to know everything, both new and old, he proceeded to inform me that in the contemplation of higher prices he had purchased yarns to the extent of close upon a million pounds weight ! Such a transaction was new to me, certainly ; and I wished him a good night's repose after such momentous doings. Cotton followed the course he had predicted for it, with the result that he and his firm coined money on that and similar occasions. His transactions

were so large as to influence the market, which generally advanced after he had filled his book. Doubtless such heavy business must have produced an exhausting effect, for I observed that after a "lunge" as Mr. Morewood expressed it, he generally took a holiday immediately, and I followed him mentally to the shores and hills of the lovely islands he delighted to visit, pitching pebbles into the waves, or practising his deep bass voice on the summit of one of the mountains—all this to go on until a considerable portion of the cheap purchases were used up and the time almost arrived for another venture. Unlike him my holidays were few and of short duration.

On returning to the mill from the Exchange one afternoon I passed a tall gentleman in clerical costume, who, from the position where I met him, might have just left it. When I reached the door I looked back. He had reached the corner of the street, and likewise looked back. Our eyes met, and we paused. In another second or two we each met again. We needed no introduction. In the person of the stranger I intuitively recognized the new rector of the parish, Mr. Thomas Howard, x whilst he also correctly guessed me to be the person whom his predecessor had, he informed me, told him to "look up." We had a short conversation in the office, and whilst I regarded the comparatively youthful and somewhat delicate appearance of the young parson, I involuntarily shuddered in the contemplation of the heavy work he had undertaken and of the fate which had overtaken his predecessor.

My new friend, however, was ardent and hope-

x Rev Thomas Howard Gill.

ful. He had great experience of parochial work and of preaching, and was fond of the working man. He was, moreover, the son of a parson, nephew of another, brother of several more, and had cousins who were parsons *ad infinitum*. All these forces combined, I thought, were irresistibly in his favour if he would only act with judgment, and not sacrifice himself at the outset. I little thought what powers of labour were latent in that spare figure. In a short time the sorrowing parish was turned into one of joy, and it was soon evident the late rector was speaking from knowledge when he said he would be a man after his own heart, for was he not a man after every heart, young or old, who had yet come under his influence? We became intimate, and he was very dear to me, and in religious matters invaluable.

Whilst rejoicing in his acquaintance I was, however, painfully reminded of the recent fate of another friend. Alfius Banham, the man whom I had loved above others in my early days, and whose visit to me at F. I have mentioned in the early pages of this book, was no more. In the zenith of his usefulness and success, and apparently with a brilliant career before him, he was, by an inscrutable visitation of Providence, cut off in the prime of life by the accidental discharge of a gun. The loss to his widow and six children can be better imagined than described, and to myself it was a severe affliction. I remember the care with which I collected all his letters, how I read them and re-read them, thirty-eight in all, and I now cherish them as the outpourings of one who loved me and

was equally loved in return. My life for many years had been so active, and devotion to business so close, that few opportunities had been afforded of visiting my parent, except at distant intervals ; and so she visited us in Manchester instead. But the result was, I did not see Banham for several years before his death, and latterly, few letters had passed between us. His last letter was warm in congratulations on my marriage and wishes for our happiness. It is sometimes remarked that early ardent friendships moderate after marriage. Doubtless Banham and I regarded each other with the same affection as formerly, but other and nearer objects of interest had sprung up, and distance of time and space may have appeared to dim all but the remembrance of regard, but they did not.

Eusebius Pigott was one of the comparatively few of my bachelor friends who was a constant visitor at my little house. As it was situated only a few minutes from his own quarters he was in and out of it continually, and acquainted with our *menage*. Eusebius professed to carry a latch-key, which unfortunately he could never find when it was wanted. It frequently happened that when he found himself at his lodging door at a late hour, he fumbled in his pocket in vain for the coveted means of admission. His landlady he described as sleeping at the back part of the house ; she was also as deaf as a post ; and but for the proximity of our domicile I used to tremble to think what would become of Eusebius ! It was a mercy for him I was not similarly afflicted as his landlady, or he might have been left out in the cold very often.

Eusebius fortunately was one who could accommodate himself to circumstances, and could repose occasionally on a drawing-room couch, and as ours was available for a lengthened repose, we generally left it at night ready for an emergency.

On the last occasion of an early morning visit, which was at the hour of three, Eusebius came to the conclusion that he might, after all, without very much effort of ingenuity, attach a latch-key in some manner to his person, and for a time he carried one on his button-hole ; but as that was not a convenient position for it to be in when wanted he compounded with his landlady not to fasten the street door at night, and as no loss arose from nocturnal depredators the new arrangement worked satisfactorily. And yet Eusebius had an inventive genius which should have relieved him of such inconveniences. A man who could initiate a bullet capable of slaughtering ten times the number of soldiers in one shot of those of the arms then in use, and could also discover a signal which would for ever prevent an accident in the history of railway locomotion, might surely have introduced some kind of a spring beneath one of the flags of his door entrance which, on the pressure of his foot and pronouncing his "Open sesame," would have admitted him at once to his apartment.

Harewood complained often and loudly of his partner, who instead of bringing his share of insurance business to the firm was continually occupied in the development of some grand scheme, whilst the burden of business fell upon Harewood. It was in vain I informed him that if it were successful it might be accompanied by a new era in the

happiness of mankind, in addition to bringing a fortune for Eusebius, in which Harewood would participate. It became evident that unless some change took place things could not thus go on.

Eusebius was not an actuary. Had he been one his enthusiasm for logarithms and the differential calculus might have proved serviceable to him, but for the purpose of inducing the public to insure their lives and property they were of little avail, and the volume of "Todhunter" which he carried under his arm might have well been substituted by a pocket-book. As I saw each of them frequently, it fell to my lot to have the complaints of each other dinned into my ears. I sympathized with Harewood, upon whom fell the "burden and heat of the day" of business, and hardly less with Eusebius, whose inventions hitherto had proved abortive. The latter grumbled and groaned so continuously and systematically over the failure of all his efforts, whether inventive or commercial, that I became myself depressed with the sad tale of his woes. Fortunate it was for each of us, though strange, that the "Dead March" never failed to bring out those phases which more nearly approached the angelic of Eusebius's character. The "Dead March," however, in time became hackneyed, and as there was nothing to take its place it was evident ere long there must be a new departure.

Notwithstanding the generous sympathy shown to Lancashire during the cotton famine by the whole civilized world, and the liberal contributions that flowed into the Cotton District Relief Fund, poverty and want were plainly indicated in the

faces of many of the people who inhabited such parishes as the one where our mill was situated. Though nearly two millions sterling in money and goods had been received, including the contribution of provisions contained in the George Griswold from North America, an offering which knit together the hearts of the people of the two great nations more than language can ever convey, much distress still existed, there being ninety thousand more paupers than was ordinary in the cotton districts.

The most distressing feature of the times was noticeable in the little children, who suffer more than adults from insufficiency of food, and it was not possible to walk the streets without this fact being impressed upon the mind.

Mr. Howard's senior curate, Mr. Cogan^x, a warm-hearted Irishman, joined me in an attempt to mitigate this evil. Like myself, Mr. C. had children of his own, and our hearts were touched. We started our scheme on the same day it was planned, under the title of "The Destitute Children's Dinner Society." We hired a room and commenced feeding thirty to forty of the poor little creatures at once. Presently we were joined by other men who sympathized in the movement, which soon spread considerably. A committee was formed, and a gentleman in the city lent his office, in which the members met weekly, and he gave his own services as honorary treasurer. Subscriptions were obtained without much solicitation, and the society flourished, each year accomplishing more than the preceding one, with the result that any poor child in our district

^x Rev W. Cogan.

might have a good meat dinner twice a week. Mr. Thomas Wright, the prison philanthropist, gave good testimony to the beneficial effects the society had conferred upon the children; but the best evidence was that given by the teachers in the national and other schools, who had been made painfully conscious of the utter impossibility of any mental application whilst the body suffered from an insufficiency of nutriment. It was from this point of view that Mr. Wright expressed himself so warmly when he pronounced his blessing on the work. Another institution in the same locality, which possibly exists to this day, was presided over and conducted by a fine, spirited, and high-souled young lady. The object of her efforts was to provide sustenance, delicately prepared, for invalids and convalescents, at that critical period when medicine has done its work in reducing the patient, and the appetite must be encouraged for the preservation of life. It was a noble work, requiring much skill and judgment, with great self-denial, and ability to raise funds—which must necessarily be liberal—for its successful performance. Doubtless many lives were saved by this unostentatious, but inestimable, benevolent undertaking.

Mr. Tumbleton had been vigorously prosecuting business of a less prosaic nature. I never supposed he contemplated a second edition of the marriage state, and when a gentleman on the Exchange informed me to the contrary, I was quite ready to meet the assertion with incredulity bordering on contradiction. I had not long to wait for correct information. The following morning Mr. Tumble-

ton walked unexpectedly into the office. I noticed his altered and improved personal appearance, which doubtless bespoke something. He was embellished with new hat, walking-stick, and eye-glass, irrespective of the more important articles of coat, vest, and other articles, all of which were of the latest and most approved style. I had never before seen him so well got up. He was quite a work of art. I instinctively recalled the information imparted to me on the previous day, and waited with dignified attention the news he was about to impart. I admired his courage, and the business-like manner in which he linked one thing with another, leading up to the all-important event, and after enumerating things he was going to do, wound up with that of being married early during the following week. He received my felicitations in an appreciative and becoming mood, and I left him to have a ramble amongst the looms.

CHAPTER XVII.

FLUCTUATIONS IN COTTON—PICTURE COLLECTING AND SALES.

THE continued scarcity of cotton had a telling effect upon prices, which were perilously high, whilst the fluctuations in the market were frequent and often startling, a fall or advance of threepence per pound occurring in one day.

Our manufactory, though a small one, put through a fair amount of business; it was worked with vigour, and the turnover corresponded. Fidus Achates was not slow during the cotton scarcity in adapting himself to the exigencies of the times. He was a philosophical spinner, and brought such intelligence to bear upon the difficulties created by the altered state of affairs that he escaped much of the evils experienced by others. Notwithstanding the dearth of the raw material, the aggregate business he transacted with our firm from 1866 to 1870 reached the large sum of nearly one hundred thousand pounds sterling, which we paid for a miserable-looking thread, produced with consummate skill from an article which, I frequently reminded him, in a playful manner, resembled chopped hay. With another distinguished firm of spinners in Rochdale our business was yet more extensive, and for some years, during the scarcity, we paid them an average of twenty to twenty-five thousand pounds sterling for an article of standard

quality, but which, in the absence of the American fibre, could only be produced by the additional skill and intelligence which was brought to bear upon it. The fluctuation in prices was terrible. In subsequent years it was impossible to contemplate the purchases of those times without emotion, and also a feeling of thankfulness that destruction was escaped.

For some years I was in the habit of utilizing the short Easter holiday which, lasted four days, in a walking tour in North Wales. On such occasions Fidus Achates was my companion. He was a good pedestrian, and could be relied on to take leg exercise when the holiday came round and the weather proved fine. We generally took our pleasure quietly, walking, knapsacked, some twenty-five miles daily. On one occasion we found ourselves in Anglesea, somewhat hot and tired with our exercise, and in the vicinity of what my friend called a "pub." A short rest and the inevitable draught followed, with refreshing effect, and all would have been well for my peace of mind had my eye not alighted on a copy of the *London Times*, lying on a table, which, when being scanned, revealed the fact of another great battle which had been fought in America, in which General Lee was defeated. I remembered with disquietude that I had made a large purchase of the raw material on the previous day, and the contemplation of it greatly interfered with the enjoyment of the holiday. On my return to Manchester on the following Monday I found the effect of the battle had caused a fall of 3d. per pound in cotton. Before another week

had passed, however, a Southern success, in its turn, brought a reaction—the fall of 3d. having recovered, with a further rise. And thus the market went its course, our 20's P.C. having reached 1s. 11d. and warps 2s. 5d. per pound.

Mr. Tumbleton renewed his youth after his marriage, and appeared to take a new lease of life. He had made a wise choice in the selection of a wife, and the result was seen in his improved appearance, with every indication of an extension of the mortal span. The impression conveyed to my mind when I was introduced to the lady was that my partner had obtained a prize. Previous to his marriage our term of partnership, which lasted seven years, expired by effluxion of time. A new partnership was entered upon, but on this occasion for ten years instead of seven. The firm of Tumbleton and Co. was substituted by that of Tumbleton and G, the "Co.," which had been my chrysalis condition, emerging after seven years of transition into my fully developed self.

One morning a carriage stopped at the mill. It was a handsome modern brougham, driven by a well-dressed coachman with a showy white horse. It contained Mr. and Mrs. Tumbleton. Mr. Tumbleton directed the coachman to inquire if I was ready for my departure to the city, and would like a ride. I was soon equipped and driven thither accordingly. Nearly every morning after this, until Mr. Tumbleton sold his town residence and took one by the sea side, I had my morning drive to Manchester.

After the advent of the second Mrs. Tumbleton

Irwell House became a centre of attraction and the scene of many entertainments given from time to time, at which distinguished clergymen of his church were sometimes present. Tumbleton loved repartee, and whether it was the production of another or emanated from himself his appreciation of it was betrayed by his convivial laugh.

At his supper table, when a large number of distinguished guests were assembled, the subject of the wig worn by John Wesley was introduced. The existence, probable whereabouts, texture, and nature of the substance with which it was dyed were all discussed with animation. Very little light was thrown upon the subject, though there was much speculation concerning it, and especially the nature of the dyeing material. A Mr. Brown,^x whose thick hair was conspicuous, was seated in front of Mr. Tumbleton, who happened latterly to have entered on a period of baldness. When the discussion of the wig had come to an end my partner, with a knowing glance of the eye, exclaimed, "Brown, if you were to dye your hair you wouldn't want a wig, would you?" Mr. Brown hesitated a moment, and replied, "No, Mr. Tumbleton; but if you were to dye your hair you *would* want a wig!" Mr. Tumbleton was in no way daunted by the reply, which brought forth peals of laughter, no one apparently enjoying the repartee more than himself.

The frequency of my visits to Mr. Rareworthy's and other galleries, extending over a period of sixteen years, resulted in the accumulation of a large number of drawings and pictures. The walls of my house, including those of all the bedrooms,

^x Rev Hugh Stowell Brown.

were covered with them. It became necessary, therefore, if the visits to the galleries were to be continued, some or all must be disposed of, there being no more room for additional works. My life had been sweetened by its association with pictures, and it therefore remained my intention to continue the pursuit of collecting so long as I was able. On communicating with the celebrated firm of auctioneers in London, Mr. Christie, jun., came to my house and catalogued the works. In a few weeks afterwards they were put to the hammer and sold at Christie and Manson's rooms, at that time in King Street, St. James's Square. I did not regard the sale as a particularly good one, although some of the drawings brought moderately high figures. A little drawing of Corsica, by J. M. W. Turner, measuring about seven inches by five, which had once belonged to the late Canon Kingsley, realized 100 guineas, and was bought by Messrs. Agnew, from whom I had purchased it. This was a lovely little drawing, depicting the shores of the Mediterranean, and high up was the evening star, reflected in the ripples of the water. I wonder who is now the happy owner of that drawing! A Meadow Scene, with Cattle, by that prince of painters, David Cox, brought 140 guineas. Three of Sam Prout's architectural subjects sold for £256. Two of Fred Tayler's figure compositions for £213; and a very small drawing, exquisitely painted by George Cattermole, obtained 80 guineas, and another by the same artist £111. One of Clarkson Stanfield's highly-finished drawings sold for 105 guineas. The subject was Mount St. Michael, Cornwall,

and it was considered to be one of the most perfect specimen of Stanfield's work. I purchased it, with a vast number of other fine drawings, from the late W. Smith, of Messrs. Grundy and Smith.

In this sale there was a remarkable drawing, by De Wint, of a hayfield, with figures resting. It had all the appearance of a highly-finished work, but in reality was made up of broad washes. Its charm consisted not in the delineation of the figures or the correct representation of the hay industry, but in the transparency of its delicious colour and wonderful atmospheric effect. For many years afterwards I had opportunities of beholding, with loving eyes, that wonderful drawing, which was purchased by Fidus Achates, at whose house I saw it from time to time. Many drawings brought considerably more money than I gave for them, whilst others did not fare so well. The collection contained a hundred works, the whole of which were by good men, and included thirty-nine drawings by David Cox, five beautiful specimens of De Wint, seven of Samuel Prout's architectural subjects, eight fine drawings by George Cattermole, and four of George Barrett's classical compositions.

A sale every now and then is a necessity to one who continually dabbles in art. Several times afterwards I parted with collections with varied results. Occasionally I sold them privately, having in one instance a transaction with an eminent firm amounting to several thousand pounds. The transaction was completed in half an hour! I accumulated fine old and modern engravings

and etchings, which were also disposed of by auction. They numbered 164 lots in the catalogue, and consisted of subscription copies by modern men, in the first state, with fine early impressions of Sir Joshua Reynolds's works, including many of the favourites, which brought high prices.

Of Sir Edwin Landseer's works I seem to have had impressions of everything he ever did, and *remarque* proofs abounded. J. M. W. Turner was seen to perfection, as reproduced by such men as Charles Turner, Willmore, Miller, Lupton, and Le Keux.

The thirteen cartoons by F. J. Shields, representing the "Triumph of Faith," which I bought from that artist, were put into this sale, and were bought in. Subsequently I sold them to some gentlemen of spirit in the city, who presented them to the Royal Institution in Mosley Street, where they now hang.

Mr. Rareworthy had quite a daily levee at his establishment, which was assiduously attended by men of much knowledge and experience of art matters. Conspicuous amongst them was Mr. Barner, a gentleman advanced in life, a portion of which had been spent in foreign countries, where he had visited the various galleries with the ardour of an enthusiast. He would probably as soon neglect his church on Sunday as fail to pay his morning visit to the Art Galleries in Manchester. x Mr. Barner was so well-known through the regularity of his visits to the various establishments that he acquired the designation of "Pictorial" Barner, to distinguish him from others bearing the same name, but who were not distin-

Mr J. Barner.

guished by his proclivities. It was amusing to be a listener to his criticisms on a picture, which were sometimes given with good judgment, but generally in a manner so unequivocal that his denunciations of an inferior or doubtful work, should one happen to present itself, were as instructive in their mercilessness as were his encomiums upon a good work possessing more than ordinary merit. At these gatherings I met the same men for many years. Many, varied, and occasionally vehement were the expressions of opinion on drawings and pictures which came under notice from time to time.

Mr. Barner, in respect to his seniority, was granted a priority in the expression of approval or condemnation. There was, however, another gentleman as enthusiastic as himself, who was also a constant and regular visitor at the establishment. He was of a different temperament to Mr. Barner, and rarely betrayed any emotion unless an opinion in direct opposition to his own views was authoritatively advanced by Mr. Barner. On such occasions their respective oratory was tested to the utmost, and after all the information which could be elicited was acquired by those present during the contest, where frequently logic and facts went to the wall, Mr. B., by his impetuous eloquence, remained apparently the master of the field. Mr. Rareworthy must in his time have been the quiet observer of many a contest between zealous and excited art disputants.

In the meantime many changes had taken place in some of the households whither I was attracted from time to time. After Mrs. Airlie's death,

her two daughters broke up the old home which had been so long associated with pleasant memories.

Mrs. Alison, after her husband's death, felt the loneliness of her position. Who so admirably adapted for a companion as her old schoolfellow and friend of her youth, Mrs. Cowper! Accordingly, from that time, the two friends lived together, passing the remainder of their lives in each other's society.

My visits to Mrs. Alison's house were continued with the former regularity, and I joined the pleasant gatherings frequently assembled there. On those occasions a stranger would not discern which of the two ladies was the mistress of the establishment, Mrs. Cowper, moving about so quietly and gracefully amongst the visitors, chatting with one and then another of them on congenial topics, and entertaining all with her powers of conversation, to the great relief of Mrs. Alison, whose advancing years were beginning to interfere with her own hospitable inclinations.

Mrs. Gower, who had retired to the occupation of a pretty cottage, taking with her the faithful servitor, was generally present at these little parties, which were so bright and cheerful as to make even the anticipation of them a source of gladness.

But alas! Mrs. Cowper was not long permitted thus to greet the friends who had been influenced by her gentleness and goodness in former days. Though youthful still in mind and manner, Mrs. Cowper was now advanced in years, and disease must have been busy with her in making its insidious inroads.

When I called one evening to see the ladies Mrs. Alison alone was visible. Mrs. Cowper was unwell and confined to her room. I never saw her again. Kind messages passed between us, but we never again met. Presently the old retainer followed the daughter of his aged mistress, and Mrs. Gower filled the sister's place by the side of the friend and schoolfellow. Yet a little while and Mrs. Alison followed her dear friend to the unknown land. Of that genial little circle Mrs. Gower, who was the youngest member of it, alone remains to recall those happy days.

I soon had to deplore the loss of my own dear mother, whose failing health for some months had been occasion for solicitude, and had caused me to make a visit to Bath. A telegram reached me from my sister, informing me of her alarming condition, and I hastened to her bedside, but arrived too late to see her alive at the friend's house where she died. My mother lived to a good old age, and had considerable enjoyment of life in her latter years, which were free from any particular sorrow or bereavement, and were passed in visiting one and another of her children, who were all married and surrounded by the inevitable olive branches.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHURCH WORK IN ANCOATS—REMOVAL TO CHESHIRE.

OF the many difficulties with which a manufacturer has to contend there is perhaps not one that taxes his mental powers, causes him more anxiety and sleepless nights, than the continuance of a falling market. An article the normal value of which was from fivepence to sixpence per pound, though it had not long previously fallen to fourpence, had since risen to half-a-crown, but must, sooner or later, return to within a measurable distance of its former value. It is during the time of its declension the man of business suffers, but especially the manufacturer. The merchant can peremptorily stop his operations. The agent suffers little, his loss being confined to the diminution of his commission. The manufacturer, on the other hand, is unable to follow the masterly inactivity of his customer who refuses to buy in a falling market. He has to think of his mill and his workpeople. If he resorts to the questionable specific of short time, the cost of his diminished production is thereby considerably enhanced, and an assured loss to his industry ensues. To close his mill sometimes becomes a necessity, and when this last resort is effected he knows that a yet greater penalty

awaits him in the dispersion of his hands and the deterioration of his machinery, in addition to the loss of his yet unsold stock.

We had passed through another decennial crisis, which was longer and sharper than that of 1857. We now suffered, and apparently were likely to suffer for a time, from a deficiency of cotton, in addition to which there had been deficient wheat harvests at home, causing an injurious effect upon trade. A good wheat and hay harvest is watched and hoped for by the Lancashire manufacturer with a solicitude only exceeded by that with which the American crop is watched.

In 1869 there was a good harvest, and the advantages of it were felt, notwithstanding the deficiency in the cotton supply. Our looms were kept well employed, and we continued to have a good business, after escaping the shoals and pitfalls to which we were exposed. When 1870 had arrived we could buy for 1s. per pound the article largely in consumption with us, for which we had paid 2s. at the highest point of the market.

Mr. Tumbleton made another movement. He sold Irwell House, with its contents, bade adieu to Manchester, and betook himself to a furnished residence by the sea-side, where I was his frequent guest. He did not, however, make his departure until the accomplishment of an object upon which he had long set his heart. I was present at the unique ceremony of the simultaneous laying of four foundation stones (the performance being effected by four of the fair sex, his own wife being one of them), upon which was erected an imposing

church, which afterwards was completed and opened with attractive services and much success, another silver trowel being added to the already formidable collection.

When he arrived at the sea-side another church was erected; but I think a resident gentleman, in this instance, qualified for the possession of the trowel. Indeed, the collection had attained the extent of its proportions, and received no more additions, notwithstanding that Mr. Tumbleton had not ceased to be enthusiastic in the erection of Wesleyan churches. The last that engaged much of his old enthusiasm was an imposing edifice that sprung up in a neighbouring township on the coast, whither Mr. Tumbleton repaired, bought a house, and settled in the fashionable resort. It was his last change. Mr. Tumbleton remained faithful to hydropathy, a year seldom passing that he did not renew acquaintanceship with the institution at Matlock. Notwithstanding his devotion, and in spite of every precaution, time was perceptibly telling its tale upon him. The white locks which had replaced the brown hair spoke of increased age; and a marked feebleness of gait took the place of the vigorous step of a few years back: the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble had arrived. Hydropathy may have been an auxiliary in his preservation, but doubtless it was more the result of the composure and serenity of his declining years, which was due to the devoted care of his wife, whose watchfulness of him was incessant. There had been nothing in his appearance to indicate anything beyond the decline of an otherwise good

constitution, and I was not prepared for a telegram which was sent me by his wife, asking me to come over, and informing me of his serious indisposition. On my arrival I was shocked with his altered appearance. When able to recognize me, he said, with a sad gaze, "Ah, G., I am at the far end." That his exclamation was correct was too apparent for much hope to be expressed. I remained with him for some time, but there appeared no symptom of rallying. It appears he had incautiously remained out on an inclement night, had caught a severe cold, and was attacked with congestion of the lungs. He survived some days, and I again visited him, and observed he had undergone a considerable change for the worse. With some difficulty I understood him to say that if he were removed to Dr. Smedley's he thought he would recover. But he was beyond the reach of hydro-pathy or any mortal aid. The doctor had sent a man to attend him, but there was no more treatment. He died on 27th February, 1873.

The widely-spread parish of St. J. proved a fruitful field for the Rev. Mr. Howard during the time of his labours there, which lasted six years. I watched him closely, for I admired his way of working amongst the people, and the success which accompanied his efforts. He was ever in their midst. His regard for the working man, which he expressed at our first interview, had been tested, and had proved to be only greater than their love and appreciation of him, which was seen in the manner they were attracted to the Sunday and weekday services, together with the clubs, classes, and various societies he had initiated.

But as I feared, so it happened: the health of Mr. Howard, surrounded as he was by soot and smoke, gave way, and the doctor demanded his removal from St. J. After the inevitable rest, with recuperation, my friend left us, and was appointed rector of the largest and most wealthy parish in Manchester.

It would be well for our Church if all her clergy served such an apprenticeship as would be afforded by a season of labour in a parish like St. J., with its teeming population abounding in poverty and want, surrounded with temptation and crime, and with hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of souls in the midst of the prevailing gloom, possessing cravings for better things. Such an apprenticeship would bring with it a valuable experience which could not be acquired in a community such as that in which Mr. Howard was now called to labour. Go, however, where he may, Mr. H. must leave his mark, and in his changed surroundings was no less indefatigable than when elevating the working man. In the new parish he built churches and erected schools which will remain the monuments of his energy. The active workers in the parish of St. J., after Mr. H. had left it, desired to present him with a gown (gowns were sometimes worn in those days and considered typical of good preaching, none but an able man venturing to appear in one). The new rector asked me to make the presentation. I had no objection, provided a speech would not be expected from me on the occasion. An enthusiastic meeting, attended by school workers and other active spirits, was held in the large schoolroom, and many were the loving

reminiscences of the labours of the recent pastor which were brought to mind. The oratory was good, practical, and unemotional, and adapted for the occasion, one Irish friend, however, thrilling some of us with his eloquent and appropriate sentences.

When the time came for the presentation to be made, I was painfully conscious of my inability to continue the flow of wisdom which had streamed from the lips of others, and hastily decided that the time for action had arrived, whilst that of words was over. I therefore mounted a chair, and holding in my hand the interminably long gown (for the parson was between six and seven feet high, and, of course, the vestment was made to correspond), allowed it to remain for a few seconds before the gazing eyes of the appreciative spectators. then turning towards the reverend gentleman, with an expressive look of my own approbation, requested his acceptance of the graceful tribute from his late parishioners and fellow-workers, at the same time lending him a helping hand with his envelopment in the gown, and otherwise making as much commotion as possible. I made a successful escape from speaking, probably to the disgust of many, the rector himself saying he thought I would have made a speech.

When Mr. Howard left St. J.'s he was succeeded by the Rev. John Wansot,^f whose entrance upon the scene was a guarantee that the heavy calls of the parish would not suffer in the hands of the new rector. He was the chairman of our meeting, and spoke of his predecessor's labours in a neat little speech full of fine feeling. It was he who

secured my services in the presentation. He also secured them as the treasurer of his schools, which during his time he worked up to a high state of efficiency. I held the post for many years, and as it brought me into frequent contact with the various masters and mistresses, for whom I had the honour of writing quarterly cheques, and of exchanging sentiments from time to time, the office was attended with much that was edifying and instructive. I have often wondered if the attendance, the school pence, subscriptions, and Government grants have continued to increase in the same ratio as during my time. If so, they must now be prodigious.

Mr. Wansot must have been the possessor of an iron constitution. He laboured in the parish for a period exceeding the united years of his predecessors. I never heard of a breakdown, and I hope he may never have one; but if any man ever earned a canonry, Mr. Wansot is the man.

Another instance of inexhaustion and unweariedness was the indefatigable Scripture reader, Mr. Morsley,^x who was in and out of my office frequently. What a walker that man was! Five miles an hour seemed his speed, which he could check with his instantaneous-acting brake, and again return to the old speed without any loss of time. When walking it was obvious he redeemed the time.

Simultaneously with my partner's removal to the seaside, I quitted the smoky town and went to live in Cheshire, having in my daily journeys to and from Manchester to cross the railway viaduct at Stockport, on which, twenty-two years pre-

^x Morsley.

viously, the passing view I obtained of the town, with its then smoking chimneys, had inspired me with so many misgivings. It may not be strange that our early feelings seldom long obtrude themselves on the mind, after the incurrence of accumulated responsibility. Mine did not, for at the time I commenced these daily journeyings, my olive branches mustered a quarter of a score.

After so long a residence in the Manchester atmosphere I appreciated the pure air of Cheshire not a little. Forty hours, passed four times a year at the northern marine resort—four days walking over Welsh mountains, with Fidus Achates, with an occasional day spent at Haddon with the same individual—a short trip to Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, once made in each instance, and a hasty visit to Bath and London when occasion required it—formed the extent of my absence from Manchester, which twice in twenty-five years extended to a whole week. I must have been very much attached to Manchester! When once located in the pure country district, I felt independent of any holiday whatever.

It was a new experience to welcome every now and then a Manchester resident to my rural retreat—to furnish such a one with a glass of pure milk, fresh from one's own cow, and to offer him a night's lodging in the country, if he were so inclined. At different periods, and frequently, I welcomed my earliest Lancashire friend, Mr. Thornton, who, too, was betraying symptoms of departing health. He increased my happiness when he told me the hours spent in my company were some of his most pleasant ones. We occasionally renewed acquaint-

ance with the former years and their association with trouble and perplexity. The New Zealand experiences were told again and again with never-failing zest, and hours were passed in depicting the beauties of climate and landscape of the country. Could he have made any reasonable excuse to do so he would have gladly returned to end his days in the colony.

Mrs. Gower was also a welcome visitor at various times, recalling by her presence the years when cares were few and hope was strong. We often lived over the old times, continuing our prattle into the small hours of the morning, when prudence dictated it was time to retire for the repose necessary for the discharge of the next day's duties. Fidus Achates found me out, as also did my old and able art friend, Le Resurns, who revelled alternately in nature, art, and minstrelsy; and a week seldom passed that Manchester was not represented by some of its jaded citizens in the Cheshire home.

Soon after our arrival the village was made lively by the advent of a young curate and his wife. He was quite young, and had not long been in holy orders; but he was descended from a direct long line of ecclesiastical ancestry, and this circumstance must have accounted for the extent of his learning and his capacity in the pulpit and reading desk, which could not have been acquired in so short a lifetime as his. The Rev. J. T. Pollard was an institution. There was nothing in which he was not an adept, whether the subject related to an "old father" or the formation of a cricket club. In his school days he had been a kind of perpetual champion, and his rooms were

x Le Resche xx Pollard

more or less filled with goblets made of the precious metal, the result of his established supremacy in outdoor games. Though not a big man, he had the energy and strength of a young Hercules. Moreover, he could run like a greyhound, and had the agility of a cat. Woe to the man who was beguiled into measuring strength with him through the circumstance of his dimensions.

With such qualifications and antecedents it is not surprising he was a favourite, especially with the young, who were always ready to follow his lead and do his bidding. The old people liked him too. There were few people in the parish he did not know. His habit was to open the cottage door unbidden, and if the weather were cold and the fire low to seat himself in close proximity, and if the good woman was busy or unable to do it herself, to turn over the dying embers for her, or perhaps light her fire for her afresh, perhaps giving a valuable hint in the economical use of the fuel, and filling her kettle from the pump previous to setting it on the neatly-made fire. But his visits were sometimes of a different kind. On passing one of the back thoroughfares, which he delighted to explore, his course was once arrested by the fearful shrieks of a woman who was being beaten by her husband in one of the cottages. Although he had not previously visited the house, he suddenly opened the door, and to his disgust beheld the inhuman brute belabouring his helpless mate. This was too much for Pollard, who rated the man in terms he could well understand, and peremptorily demanded "Hands off!" The man

was well astonished at the sudden apparition and its command, and prepared himself with a threat and a curse to throw the bold young divine through the window. The reply to "Come on then," however, caused the bully to pause, and, on a little sober reflection, also to estimate probabilities. The result was a tacit acknowledgment there was no chance for him in a pugilistic effort with the parson, who seized the opportunity to follow up his advantage by heaping such reproach on the sinner as to make him ashamed of himself, and also to confess his peculiar method of asserting authority over his better-half was not the correct one. The man was never known again to beat his wife for his dread of the parson, who afterwards had free and welcome access to the house.

Pollard had a theory of his own (which he also practised) that it was the duty of a parson to make himself acquainted and be on visiting terms with every man in the parish, rich or poor. He also maintained that the parson could exercise benefit on the people after their various characteristics had become known to him, by bringing together and introducing to each other, such men who were similar in their views, had tastes in common, and who might otherwise never become acquainted. This practice our stalwart and thoughtful young parson carried out successfully. At his rooms I first met a man who has ever since proved a good and valued friend, thus tending to confirm the principle of the power to do good which belongs to the clerical class, if they are disposed to exercise it.

It was not to be expected a man like Pollard would remain long in a curacy unless the rector possessed the attributes of an angel, and in whose breast existed no particle of envy or uneasiness. We reluctantly bade him farewell. After another curacy, he became a vicar in a northern county, x where, in his church, he has gathered a choir of unusual excellence, which, without instrumental aid, can render an attractive service, and he continues to be a friend of the helpless and a terror to the bully.

x of Brigham, Carlisle.

CHAPTER XIX.

DISASTROUS TRADE—CLOSING AND SALE OF THE MILL.

ON Tumbleton's decease, a serious consideration of my position was forced upon me. I was the surviving partner, and our articles provided the option of paying to the deceased partner's executors what was due to them in a stated time, or, failing this, the disposal of the business.

Several offers of partnership were made to me; on the one hand by gentlemen who were capitalists but having no knowledge of manufacturing, and on the other by active capable men of business who lacked the indispensable capital. To secure the latter for the future conduct of the thriving little factory was my chief concern. Apart from this consideration, a partner was not a necessity. For sixteen years the work of the establishment had fallen to my lot, and as I remained young, active, and strong, I continued to feel equal to its performance. So I decided to work the oracle and run alone.

Unfortunately, cotton still remained at a high figure, and all kinds of machinery were in the same category through the high prices ruling in iron. The valuation, therefore, was a high one. On the other hand, I gradually began to see my way to grapple successfully with the money difficulty. Through the death of my mother and

another relative, I had recently received some legacies amounting to several thousand pounds. These amounts, aided by others realized by conversions of pictures into cash, and the forbearance of Mr. Tumbleton's executors, who afforded me facilities, enabled me to meet the executorial claims and waive outside assistance.

Business continued good, and as now all the profits of it went to my credit, I began "to reap the toil of this my hard estate." Each year's results of good business was an improvement on the preceding one. If that of 1873 was satisfactory, 1874 was more brilliant, but it was excelled by 1875, which in its turn was beaten in excellence by that of 1876, which was the best business year of my life.

During these years I saw much of Mr. Thornton, who would rejoice in giving me the credit of having taken the "tide" of my affairs "at the flood." If I did so, the result was not that indicated by the poet. My good old friend did not survive to see the "ducks and drakes" which this old dame subsequently made of me, though he lived long enough to witness the devastation which she had wrought over the country generally.

In the early part of 1877 the trade was arrested somewhat abruptly, to the surprise of many, and contrary to the expectation of most business men. The causes, whatever they might be, were aided by bad harvests and the war between Russia and Turkey. Many regarded the stagnation as another inevitable decennial crisis, which would pass over, to be followed by the compensating reaction. I recalled to mind a conversation held a year previously on a homeward journey from Manchester

with a fellow-passenger who must have been inspired. Much to my astonishment, he exhorted me to sell my mill, and withdraw entirely from cotton; the simple reason given for offering such advice being his knowledge of the incapacity of our foreign and home markets to take off the ever-increasing production of the mills, and his conviction of a coming collapse in the cotton industry with regard to any more profitable business.

I had heard similar prophetic utterances during the time of former panics through which we had emerged and afterwards entered on a season of prosperity, and did not act upon his advice. To have done so, if practicable, would have appeared suicidal; but it would have been the only way of escape from disintegration. In opposition to this view, the trade generally looked hopefully for a renewal of business.

A prominent question ever presenting itself to my mind was the possibility that our goods were going out of consumption, but the unprecedented demand of 1876 forbade the arrival at any such conclusion. I was conscious that our fabrics, which were known by other makers to be in favour, had been imitated by them right and left, and the market was becoming glutted with the production of additional makers. I had also become unpleasantly aware that our former foreign customers were now sufficiently enlightened to make their own cloth, and were independent of us. But even these considerations were slow to be regarded as sufficient to account for the apparent termination of business.

I was frequently in earnest consultation with my old friend Moregood, whose experience had been great and his judgment sound. He now confessed his perplexity, and regarded his experience of no value, though he advanced many a hypothesis. In view of contingencies, I decided that the present condition of the times with the uncertain look-out were inconsistent with the retention of so valuable a collection of pictures and drawings as that which I now possessed, and resolved on their dispersion. The collection was well known to the enterprising manager of the great firm of picture dealers in London, Manchester, and Liverpool. He had seen them many times at my house, and had spoken of the animation with which they would rekindle the picture market if brought into it. This gentleman, when I had told him of my intention, consulted his principals on the best mode of dispersion, and suggested an exhibition of them in their own establishments. His proposition was assented to, and in March, 1878, the exhibition was opened.

When hanging on the walls of the extensive gallery in which they were exhibited the effect of the drawings was very imposing. Hitherto they had been scattered, and had hung in every room of my house. Now that they were assembled on one background they afforded an agreeable sight, no one being more astonished with their harmony of colour than myself, notwithstanding my familiarity with each individual work. In my enthusiasm I exclaimed to the devotees of David Cox and De Wint the Italian proverb, "See Naples and die," substituting the two clever old artists for

the former capital of the Two Sicilies. Such an exhibition, with a view of sale on the part of a client, was a departure from the rules of the eminent firm who conducted it. They made an exception, however, in my favour, for which they will always remain entitled to my warmest acknowledgement. I was afterwards informed by the head of the firm he would not again consent to a similar transaction, for the sufficient reason that their gallery generally existed for the sale of their own works.

When the depressed condition of the Lancashire industry of 1878 is taken into consideration, the exhibition was a success. In its earlier stage there was a rush of visitors and customers. It was only when the great strike of the Preston cotton spinners occurred that a check was put to the business which commenced so auspiciously. Of the 122 beautiful works forming the collection, the following artists, with their number of examples, were included: David Cox, thirty-seven; De Wint, ten; George Barrett, seven; George Cattermole, seven; Copley Fielding, five; D. Roberts, five; William Hunt, five; Sam. Prout, four; F. Taylor, three; J. M. W. Turner, one. The collection contained two wonderful little oil pictures by Briton Riviere, and another by Luke Fildes, and in it were also works by Colman, T. M. Richardson, Turner of Oxford, Danby, Robson, Hills, Harding, Holland, Austin, Topham, Shields, and Marks. During the gloom which prevailed and was deepening, it was a daily relief to the mind, after passing the allotted conventional hour on the Exchange without results, to hurry away to the pictorial establishment, where the intelligent and

active manager, during some months, imparted to me from time to time the welcome intelligence of art sales on my behalf.

The atmosphere was thick with rumours of failures in addition to those which had recently taken place, filling the minds of people with dismay at their unlooked-for occurrence. When 1878 had run its course, the appalling number of 169 failures of important firms connected with and affecting the trade of the district had been announced, representing liabilities to the amount of thirty-two and a half millions sterling.

There was sufficient material in this medley of misfortunes to incite the powers of the thinking portion of the community. Shrewd and clear-headed men traced our disasters to the evils attendant upon one-sided free trade, and many clever letters appeared from time to time in the newspapers from writers who advocated a system of reciprocity in our fiscal policy. They urged amongst other cases that the payment annually to France of forty-five millions sterling for manufactured articles admitted free of duty was a mistake which might be corrected by the policy of a tax on those articles, unless France received our manufactures on similar terms; and that such a policy would not be an encroachment on the principles of free trade, which were established with the object of providing the nation with cheap food, and should be exclusively applied to the importation of raw material, such as corn, cotton, and cattle.

They also stated our purchases from the foreigner were nearly double the amount of his purchases from us; that whilst our business with him from

the year 1872 to 1876 had increased only thirty-nine millions, his takings from us during the same period had diminished one hundred and fifteen millions. It was argued by the anti-reciprocist that our ability to take so much in return for so little, proved clearly the superior position we had attained through the policy hitherto followed; whilst, on the other hand, the advocates for reciprocity maintained that had the hundred and fifteen millions sterling not been abstracted from the country by the foreigner, a greater number of our own workpeople might have found employment which languished for want of the capital which went into the pockets of the foreign workman.

It was in vain Mr. Bright inquired if these gentlemen complained of too many customs duties being repealed, and if they wished to put a duty on corn again, or cattle, or perhaps on imported cotton. This was considered no reply to men who recognised the necessity of free corn, cattle, and cotton, but who contended that in our blind devotion to free trade we had given everything in the way of remission of duty, had received very little in return, and that little was gradually being withdrawn; and they urged that the time had arrived for a searching inquiry into the soundness or otherwise of the regulations of our tariffs with foreign countries.

The cup of gloom seemed to be filling one day when Mr. Moregood informed me, with a countenance unlike that he had worn for many years, that he and his partner held the enormous quantity of thirty thousand pieces of their heavy goods in stock; that in the hopelessness of disposing of

them by any other means they had resolved upon the unprecedented course of selling the whole of them by auction, and afterwards retiring from the trade. The times had indeed changed when a first-class firm inaugurated such a proceeding as this! The effect of the sale was to put an end to business in the ordinary channels, and also to cause other makers to adopt the same method for the distribution of their goods.

From this time another period was marked in the commercial darkness which overspread this particular industry. In my own case, the difficulty of following the decisive movement of my neighbour seemed insuperable. Had I acted on the advice of my travelling friend of 1876, and "cleared out," as he tersely expressed it, supposing I could have found a buyer for the mill; or had I courageously, and perhaps inhumanly, brought it to an abrupt termination, I should have escaped the losses attendant upon the remaining calamitous years. It is no small or easy matter to close an old-established concern, especially one having a successful history like this. The dismissal of workpeople, with office and warehouse officials, was trying enough when the ordeal had to be endured; but whilst any hope lingered of a favourable change, and the people were piteously pleading for a continuance of employment, it became an impossible alternative, and the position of the master remained one of pain and perplexity. So long, therefore, as the necessary funds could be raised from one source and another, the engines jogged on, the looms kept in motion, the people were employed, and cloth was pro-

duced and sold again and again with never-failing loss.

My picture hobby preserved me from extinction. Whilst any available resources remained, they were absorbed in the manufacturing vortex ; when they ceased, there remained the only alternative of a final close. The sale of pictures by this time had come to a temporary end. They appeared to have quite lost their inherent value. Had it been otherwise, their proceeds would probably have been devoted to an extension of an additional period of the now miserable mill existence, had my powers of endurance continued equal to the demand upon them, of which there was now little prospect.

In the spring of 1880 I was unwell, and made a few days' visit to my sister, at Keynsham. During my absence I heard of the serious illness of Mr. Thornton. On my return to Manchester, I received a note from his nephew describing his uncle's indisposition and asking me to visit him. The intelligence would have been painful under any circumstances, but was made especially so as I was ill myself. After the visit to my old friend, on which occasion there was no mutual recognition, as the patient was dozing and must not be disturbed, in accordance with the nurse's injunctions, I returned home with uneasy and unsettled feelings—in fact, I felt undone. Mrs. Thornton afterwards told me her husband, on returning to consciousness, was informed by her of my visit, and the nurse's objection to his being disturbed. His feeble reply was, "Then I do not thank the nurse." I was too ill to visit him a second time, or pay him my last mark of regard at his obsequies.

I have, however, to some extent, re-lived my life with him whilst penning these pages. In recalling the incidents mentioned in these chapters—some of them very trifling—a wholesome feeling has been engendered in the contemplation of a good man, who, far above many of his fellows, was ever unselfish and true.

It was a distressing time when the last warps were being woven prior to closing the mill. I heard of a deputation of the workpeople, which I was too ill to receive, who wished to inform me of their readiness to work for reduced wages if the stoppage of the mill might thereby be averted. In one instance, a conspicuous worker offered his services for a year without payment, for the same object. When, eventually, the inevitable climax had arrived, the mill was closed, and the place with its contents stood in its naked misery waiting for the sale by auction, which was announced in glaring and ghastly placards fixed upon its poor old walls. The owner was *hors de combat*, and in that condition of body and mind which cared little for future eventualities.

I had barely strength left to attend at the hotel where, under the personal direction of my faithful friend and legal adviser, the mill and its contents were put up for sale, and where there were no buyers, when, in the course of a few days, I was laid up with a serious illness, which for a long period defied doctors and medicine. The bow had been bent for three weary years, and but for a naturally good constitution must have shivered into splinters. The eminent medical man, who was quietly watching me, saw how I was tending, and ordered

my removal from Manchester, with everything that would remind me of it.

Just twenty-five years previously, I was ordered by my doctor to leave Manchester to take care of itself for three months, whilst I recovered from a liver attack, brought on by work and anxiety. During the process of restoration, I well remember my fear and solicitude lest the great city during my absence would take to itself wings and fly away (like another certain commodity of which I have had experience), and that on my return to health it would nowhere be found. There were no such fears now. The dominant feeling was one of indifference and a consciousness that we had to part. A series of visits was decided on.

One of my first entertainers was Pollard, at whose hospitable house in the north I found a retreat. If there were any man capable of arousing and stimulating me, Pollard was the man. In vain, however, he resorted to a variety of devices for that object. How well I remember, on a lovely summer day, the last of my visit, he had me on the pretty lawn outside the vicarage, where the poet Wordsworth had lived in bygone days, and probably had received many an inspiration; how my friend placed me in a chair and ingeniously fastened an umbrella at the back of it to protect me from the sun, then shining with unusual vigour; how he then consulted me in selecting an appropriate chant for the coming Sunday evening service, the perfect performance of which was uppermost in his heart; how he selected Dr. Oakley's chant as being the most suitable for the fifteenth evening of the month, when the 78th

ould be sung; how, lying flat upon the
with Joule's book on the ground, he sang
memory the whole of that long Psalm to the
ful chant mentioned, at the end of which
he each time left off on a minor third, instead of
the key-note! I afterwards learned this was one
of his little stratagems to excite my attention. I
remember, most of all, the soothing effect of his
voice, in causing me to doze, and at intervals to
feel I had done with earthly affairs, and to have a
glimpse of the happier state in which, however, I
had no lot.

Other and extended visits were made to friends
and relatives in the South of England and on the
Continent, and in the course of fourteen months I
returned in the best of health, to see what Man-
chester had been doing in my absence.

CHAPTER XX.

DEPARTURE FOR AUSTRALIA.

WHEN I next beheld the great city I did so as one having a doubtful interest in it. I was no longer a cotton manufacturer. For thirty years my career, with little deviation, had been one of quiet, successful progress. I had, indeed, so to speak, never looked behind me. I was now out of the race. The mill and its contents I had parted with at a frightful sacrifice, though for the best price which could be obtained, and I was without occupation.

I soon discovered business to be in as profitless a condition as when I left it fourteen months previously, and in regarding it from whatever point I could I failed to discern any prospect of a return to the old prosperity. In many directions I marked the absence of old firms which had for a long period been conspicuous commercial landmarks, those that remained having passed into the hands of companies, whilst the others had retired from the scene. New faces appeared, whilst few of the old ones remained. The last six years of depression had left its indelible mark. In a community which, according to Ellison and Co.'s estimate, had lost nineteen millions of capital in three short years, there must necessarily be seen the effects of such a prostrating process on every side.

The conversation I had with some of the survivors offered not a shred of encouragement for another effort. Though out of the groove, I felt another attempt, however desperate, must be made, and a year was spent in efforts which were fruitless otherwise than affording a more comprehensive acquaintance with the impaired condition of the cotton industry.

At one time of the denuding process, which continued in its relentless and uninterrupted course, I thought no man (with the exception of Job) had been so stripped as myself; but I was forced to a contrary conclusion before finally deciding, at a late period of my existence, that I must bid adieu to home and country, and begin life afresh in some unknown land. The decision was a serious one, but it secured a course of action which brought relief with it, in the preparation for departure.

It would have been amusing, if it had not been so disagreeable, to watch the process of denudation at every subsequent step, whether in the destructive auction room—where people buy articles for which they have no need, and pay nothing for them—or in the wear and tear and costs of packing and freighting; not even ending with the heavy contribution levied for the final plunge which carries one across the ocean.

I had occasion to remind my old friend Eusebius of my existence, and sent him a note, to which there was no reply. On paying a visit to Mr. Howard's rectory, on a Sunday afternoon, I saw the reverend gentleman and a stranger leave the house. A loud familiar cough, to which they had

both been accustomed, brought them to a stand. The stranger was Eusebius. The ten years since last we met had told its tale upon him, as with the most of us. During this time he had ceased to be a bachelor.

Though oil, insurance, and invention alike had proved unkind, a rich wife had made amends for all. The meeting was eventful; the times had changed, and our positions were reversed. Eusebius, before I recognized him, was hastening, under the rector's guidance, to my house, to make the *amende honorable* for the neglect of my note, to assure me of his sympathy in my recent experiences, and his delight at my restored health. We now returned to the parsonage, when the rector's thoughtful wife considerably placed a room at our disposal, in which the long-separated friends might, undisturbed, talk to their hearts' content of bygone times, the present, and those that are to come.

Eusebius was slow to realize that any disaster, national or otherwise, could touch his veteran friend in the manner I had been handled; and many were the regrets which mingled with the astonishment he expressed. Eusebius was inspired with the purest feeling of affection towards "the man with whom his happiest days had been spent," not unmixed with gratitude for the kindnesses he had received. His generous Irish nature was seen to perfection when essaying to turn the current of events by the noble-minded benevolence which found expression in his looks as in his words. No, good Eusebius, I shall yet, I trust, recover equilibrium, without extraneous help,

though thy good wishes are none the less esteemed because they may not be fulfilled.

It was refreshing to hear of the trust reposed in Providence by an old acquaintance, who imparted to me the strongest encouragement in picturing the silver lining which fringes every cloud. The happy times had returned. Eusebius brought them with him on the night he afterwards passed under my roof, where a further delight was planned for a future allotted week to be devoted to rambling on the Derbyshire hills. Then *au revoir*. An epistle followed, breathing on paper the sentiments already testified in words, whilst the coming walking tour, when our minds would be unburdened and our bodies acquire fresh strength, was hailed as the coming event. There was something very nice in prospect, therefore, after the recent gloom; and I waited for the happy week, which, alas! never came, and also replies to my letters, which were never considered. O, Eusebius! Eusebius!

Soon after this time I received a letter from Mr. Moregood, to whom I had written for information respecting one of the colonies, but which he was unable to impart. In my early days he had given me his helping hand, and now was ready, as then, to bestow what aid he could:—

“April 30th, 1883.

“Dear Mr. G.,—I lost your note with your address. I cannot give you any information about Canada. I feel deeply with you and your family. It is a great trial, but you are doing quite right. *Manchester is finished*. You will become citizens of the country of the future. I believe in Canada there are ten chances to one in our country.

"I have seen many changes during the last ten years—the big ones down, the little ones up. I see the difference between one man and another to be small in comparison with the great future, and that the only question is, how shall I stand in fifty years? To this question I am giving the whole of my attention. I think God in His providence is speaking clearly to you to depart and dwell in another land.

"I again say I feel deeply with you and yours; there being that in English people which prefers the old country to any other place. May the blessing of God be on you and yours.—I am, yours very sincerely,

"F. M."

In a fortnight after I received the following, in reply to another letter to him:—

"May 14th, 1883.

"Dear Mr. G.,—Yours of the 12th is to hand. I am sorry you find it so difficult to realize, but very glad you are not the slave of regrets. I am sorry to say I have wasted scores of days in regretting I did not go out of business in '76, but I find, in looking over your note, that it will be much better not to reply to it. I will, therefore, meet you at your own hour and place in Manchester on Thursday, Friday, or Tuesday week. Send me a post-card with time and place of meeting. My daughter, who well remembers the meeting at the station, joins me in kind remembrances to you and yours.—Sincerely yours,

"F. M."

On Tuesday, June 5, he paid his promised visit at my office, which was much enjoyed; and again on Friday, the 22nd, when he spoke in the earnest, fatherly manner that reminded me of the old days. This was the last time I expected to see him, and I felt our long friendship was drawing to a close. We lingered when parting time came. At my request he wrote his name in pencil in my mem. book on my promising to write to him from

Tasmania with information of the colony. In twenty-four hours from that time he had parted with all on earth, and I mourned the loss of another of my best and earliest Manchester friends.

When it was known I was on the point of leaving Manchester, one of my club friends intimated his desire to mark the event by giving a farewell dinner to commemorate the occasion. Many friends, old and true, were invited, and fourteen gentlemen sat down to the splendid repast which was provided. It was quite a new position when I found myself for the time being an abashed hero, listening to strains of unaffected regard and goodwill from men with whom I had long been pleasantly associated, and upon whom I was now looking for probably the last time as they rose one after the other in the order they were sitting, beginning with the good-hearted chairman, at whose right hand I sat, until the vice-chairman was reached, who in turn added to the kindly words which had previously been uttered. After him the friendly sentences flowed from each individual until I only remained to express my opinions of it all as best I could.

They were all good men at that glowing gathering, whom I vividly remember, rising one after the other down one side of the long table and up the other, to deliver their sentiments, which they did with much ability, force, and animation. Could they have had a vision of the two years of perplexity which followed me after I had parted from them, and from which I have not long emerged, their commendations would have been less unequivocal, and their good wishes less confidently bestowed.

On the 26th June, I spent an hour with the Bishop at the Registry, in St. James's Square. We had frequently corresponded on Church matters, but I had never been introduced to him. He was familiar to me in the pulpit and on the platform, and I was one of the myriads who loved the Bishop without a personal knowledge of him.

I was one of the trustees of the Church of St. J., as was also his lordship, who wished to see me on the subject of my resignation, previous to my departure from Manchester. After the genial greeting, which one might expect from a man of his overflowing good-heartedness, I was quite unprepared to receive his thanks, which he accorded to me with unaffected earnestness, for what poor labours I had performed in connection with the church; and wished me, "with all his heart," God's blessing on the step I was taking, which he thought was the right one, in leaving the old country. He then wrote me a letter of introduction to my "future" Bishop of Tasmania, and after a further conversation of a hopeful kind on his part wished me God-speed on my journey. Now that the good Bishop is no more, and everything connected with him must possess an interest for Lancashire, it may not be out of place to insert the letter he wrote for me, which was not presented, as I remained only two months in Tasmania, and never reached Hobart :—

" Manchester, June 26, 1883.

" My dear Bishop of Tasmania,—My first communication with you since your elevation to the Episcopate—in which I earnestly trust that God may prosper you in all the works of your hand—is to introduce to you the

bearer of this letter, Mr. ———, who with his family is going to settle at Launceston, in your diocese, intending to engage in business as a general merchant, and to plant out his four boys upon the soil. Mr. ——— has been thirty-three years in Manchester, and has always taken an interest in church work, and has been trustee of the patronage of one of our large city churches. But things lately have not prospered with him, and he tells me that he is now a poor man. He is going, therefore, to try his fortunes in a new world, and I thought I should be doing no harm if I gave him this letter of commendation to his new Bishop.—Trusting that every blessing of health and usefulness may be yours, I am, very sincerely, your brother in Christ, "J. MANCHESTER."

When the tidings of the Bishop's death were telegraphed to Melbourne, many were the expressions of sorrow on the part of members of the community, even at this distance, by whom Dr. Fraser was known to be one of the most distinguished and energetic of the English prelates. Though far away, I mourned with Manchester in her grief, and shudder now, as many men there must, in contemplation of him who will hereafter assume the episcopal reins.

But I was not allowed to leave the city where the best portion of my life had been spent without another token of friendship and goodwill.

The good Rector of St. J. informed me that his people desired to give me a parting tribute of their regard before I vanished from the scene. I was touched to the heart, if I might use the expression, by this intimation, which was as grateful to me as it was unexpected, and comforted my last hours in Manchester. There was no time left me to meet the good folks who were prepared to

give me a parting welcome in the old scene of happier times. Time and tide wait for no man. My hours in Cottonopolis were numbered.

On the following day, Mr. Wonsat, accompanied by Mr. Worsley, on behalf of the good friends at St. J., who had not forgotten me, though I should see them no more, presented me with a Bible, prayer-book, and other volumes, bearing within them the expression of their feelings towards me. I often look lovingly on these books. There are few I value so highly.

As I mentally pass from the church and glance at the valuable institution on the other side of the way, which has grown to the importance of an Infirmary, under the presidency of Fidus Achates, I hear the sound of looms, and on crossing the canal and turning the corner, enter the mill once more, and passing up the narrow staircase see Mr. Rathway, who spent so many years of his life there. John, as I familiarly called him for more than twenty years, was at my right hand. John was a fine fellow. He weighed close on seventeen stone, and was an enthusiastic quoit player and fisherman. In the latter functions I believe he was the acknowledged head of the piscatorial amateurs in Manchester, and president of some of their associations. I once asked him how seventeen stone could stand all day by the river side when such things as varicose veins might be looming in the future. He replied to my question by presenting me with a small regulation stool, used by the members of one of his societies. It is of light weight, can be conveniently carried as a walking-stick, and is capable of bearing twenty stone if necessary. It has

many times done duty for me during deficient chair accommodation, and serves to remind me of John. Had I become a millionaire in Manchester, John would certainly have been a participator in the spoils. I hope he is alive and doing well, as he deserves.

My leave-takings had nearly been accomplished. After unsuccessful efforts on the part of Fidus Achates and myself for a final interview we failed to meet, and now two alone remained whose hands were still unshaken. Alas! those of one will ever remain unshaken. Good Mr. Rareworthy was absent from home in feeble health. Under the circumstances his daughter thought it better he was absent. We were spared the pain of parting. Few men had met more frequently for thirty years than he and I. During that long time there never was a moment when our relations of reciprocated goodwill and esteem cooled in the atmosphere of genial warmth which we breathed together. It was merciful, when we met for the last time, we were not conscious of it.

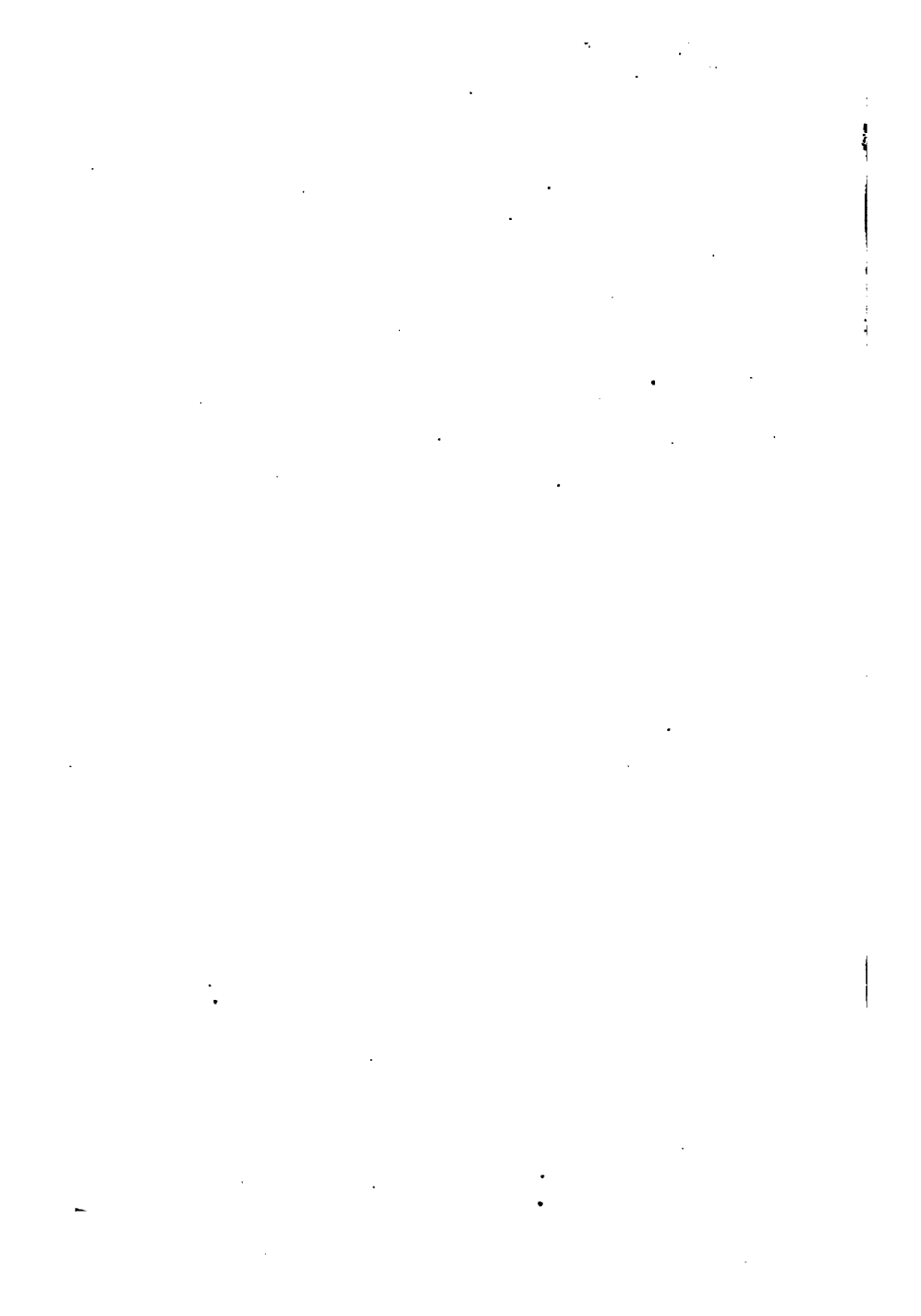
Yet, another whom I must see, if possible. His office is close by, and I have some minutes yet to spare—how fast they fly, and he has not returned. I see him in his son, the image of the father, who, when his age or younger, would have legislated for India in the Athenæum, but I waited his return in vain. A twelvemonth after, to the day, when the Editor knew where I had cast my Antipodean lot, he sent me the hurriedly-penned "God speed you," which he jotted down just after his arrival at the office and my departure from it.

One more call in Piccadilly to see another of the

men with whom I trafficked all the thirty years, from whom I have the parting gift of "Vice Versa" (now filled with passenger sketches) to cheer me on the voyage.

One friend is left me in the cab, from whom I part at London Road. He was the last. No, yet another on the platform, in railway uniform, who sees I am in the right compartment, as in days before, and then, "Good-bye and God bless you both," and, "Farewell, Manchester!"

Manchester! The same in name as when I entered it thirty-three years previously, but how changed to me, now elbowed out of it! Then a pathway lay before me, in which I walked and worked, and am still pursuing, but it leads away from former scenes of labour and toil; and believing, as did Mr. Moregood, that the departing path was the right one, I followed it, not looking back for any purpose but to record these pages. If asked how they may "interest and instruct," I scarce can say, beyond that the discharge of duty has been my effort, and faith in the result my exercise. Had I to live these thirty years again I cannot see how differently I would use them. They are but a fraction of the limitless existence which (like my friend, F. M., who asked of himself how shall I stand in fifty years hence) I regard as one complete whole, looking upon the little portion that has passed only in its relationship with the great Future, in the contemplation of which I am satisfied.





**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

[illegible]

